



Christian Benevolence.

A

S E R M O N

Preached before

The Society in SCOTLAND for propa-  
gating Christian Knowledge,

On Monday, January 3. 1763.







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## S E R M O N

Preached before

The Society in SCOTLAND for propagating Christian Knowledge,

At their Anniversary Meeting,

In the HIGH CHURCH of EDINBURGH,

On *Monday, January 3. 1763.*

By THOMAS RANDALL,

Minister of the Gospel at Inchtute.

[Published at their desire.]

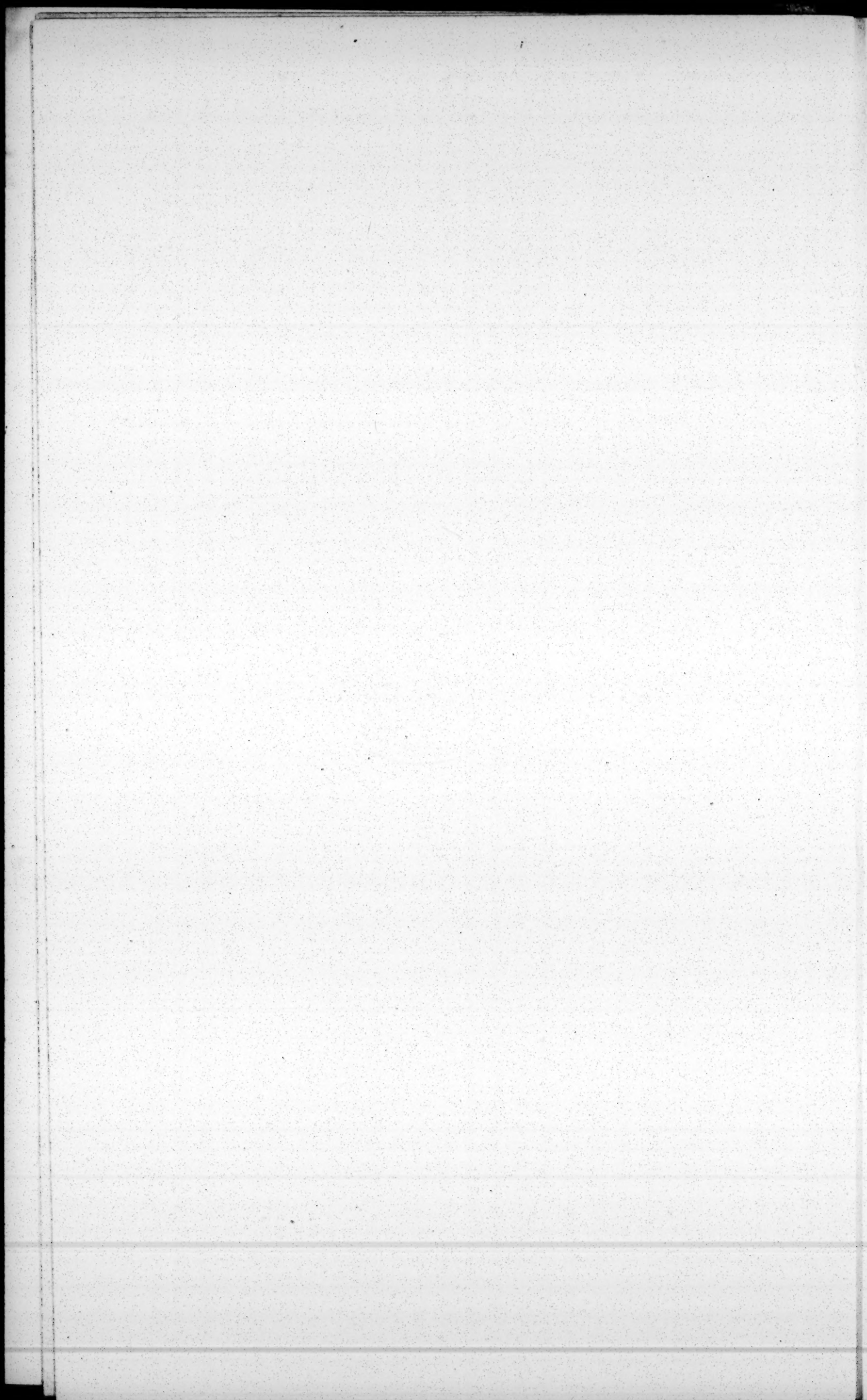
To which is annexed,

An Account of the present State of the Society.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by A. DONALDSON and J. REID.

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To the REVEREND

Mr JOHN ERSKINE,

Minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I found myself under a necessity to publish the following sermon, at the desire of that worthy society before whom it was preached, I soon perceived with what propriety it might be addressed to you.

It was evident to all, when you first entered upon the ministry of the Lord Jesus, that therein you sought not your own earthly profit, but the profit of others, that they might be saved ; and the several flocks of which in divine providence you have been overseer, bear witness, that by not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, by self-denied labour and watchfulness, you have stedfastly pursued the same end.

Neither to them only hath your concern for the salvation of men been confined ; distant churches have shared your care ; many in our plantations are no strangers to your desires after Zion's prosperity even among them ; and at this important period,



period, in particular, when so many Indian tribes have fallen under the dominion of Great Britain, our society for propagating Christian knowledge, and many others, have been witnesses of the distinguished zeal you have shewn, to promote the means for supporting a mission to bear our Redeemer's name among them, "that many may be saved."

Go on, Dear Sir, in the way you have chosen. Tread more and more in the divine and benevolent steps of your Lord, and of his apostle, ardently seeking the salvation of many men. The period is fast approaching, "when they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

Permit me to add, that it is with the greatest pleasure I take this opportunity of assuring you, that I am,

DEAR SIR,

Inchture, February 3.

1763.

*Your affectionate friend,*

*and most obedient servant,*

THOMAS RANDALL.

A D-

## A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

**W**Hen the author was called by the society for propagating Christian knowledge, to preach their anniversary sermon, this subject occurred as a proper one upon the present situation of their affairs. He could only preach a part of what he had prepared, in illustrating the apostle's argument; but when desired to publish, judged it best to give the whole. The third general head, which belongs to the examples of benevolence recommended, was not at all touched upon from the pulpit. Yet what can be more striking than this to enforce such an exhortation? We Gentiles ought to have in the highest regard whatsoever relates to our great apostle. Was ever such a lover of mankind, or ever man so like his Lord?

Some attempts have been made to set forth his life and character, but none (at least which the author hath seen) equal to the subject. What a pity is it, some masterly hand does not undertake it? A good foundation is laid in Lord Lyttelton's observations upon his conversion. But what a vast field is behind from his whole life, especially as there are so many materials, and these so authentic? The subjects they would lead to consider, are the most important and curious; and what possibly

possibly can be imagined more useful? An engagement here in every view must be superior to any disquisition upon the life and writings of Homer or Cicero, or indeed of any other man of fame, in ancient or modern times. What hints could be given in a sermon, according to the author's measure, are to be found here. And if these shall prove of use to persuade any to think more seriously of the truth of Christianity, as the evidence ariseth from this apostle, and his conduct even to death; or to reach a conviction to any in the ministry, who therein seek their own worldly advantage; or to comfort and encourage the disinterested, to go on and abound more and more in their pure love to God and souls; or if, in any respect, the discourse, or any part of it, shall have the happy effect of promoting the true spirit of divine love, by seeking the profit of many to salvation, the great end in view is answered.

Christian



# Christian Benevolence.

A

S E R M O N.

I COR. X. 33. and xi. 1.

— *Seeking — the profit of many, that they may be saved.  
Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

**I**N settling a point of conscience, concerning meats offered in sacrifice to idols, which had unhappily divided the Christians at Corinth; the apostle exhorts them to the exercise of mutual forbearance and love: "Let no man," says he, ver. 24. "seek his own; but every man another's wealth." This general principle he very properly applies to the matter in question; and concludes the subject, by recommending again this amiable disposition, as that which influenced his own conduct; wherein they should the rather imitate him, in regard of the example of Jesus Christ, which in this he followed; for surely this "was the mind which was in him."

The least degree of attention will satisfy the reader, that the first verse of the 11th chapter is torn from its subject in the 10th, by an improper division. When replaced to the 10th, we see the argument strong and complete. We observe too, that it is the same used by the apostle upon other occasions of the like nature (a). And he evidently begins a new subject in

(a) Chap. iv. 16.—19. ix. 19.—22. Rom. xv. 1.—3.

the 2d verse of the 11th chapter. And if this first verse of that chapter is not joined to the former, it must stand single and unconnected: an irregularity in writing never to be found in one of so much exactness and precision as this apostle.

We read, then, the passage from the 31st verse of the 10th chapter thus. “Whether therefore ye eat  
“ or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of  
“ God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor  
“ to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as  
“ I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own  
“ profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye imitators” (for thus it should have been rendered \*) “of me, even as I also am of Christ.” As if the apostle had said: “In the whole of your conduct towards one another, my dear brethren, instead of indulging a spirit of contention, productive of so many evil fruits, study principally, in your eating and drinking, about which you are presently divided, and indeed in all your actions, what will most advance the divine glory amongst men. Avoid, with the utmost care, what may be either a grief or a stumbling-block to others, of whatever character or denomination. So I desire to conduct myself in the world, denied to many things which to me would be agreeable, that I may the more effectually promote the edification of others; having before my eyes continually, as my great object, the eternal salvation of all without difference. And in this spirit I wish you to be imitators of me, and the rather because I herein follow the example of my great and loving Lord.”

The method in which we intend to illustrate this subject, and which, in a dependence upon the divine as-

\* *Ms. coll.*

instance, we shall endeavour to pursue, is as follows. We shall,

I. Set forth the principle upon which the apostle formed his own conduct, and upon which he foundeth his exhortation to the Corinthians; seeking the good, the wealth of others.

II. Consider the well-chosen object of this his goodwill to men, their salvation; — and this object widely extended, the salvation of many men; “of many, that they may be saved.”

III. Insist upon the motive by which he recommends this same temper to others; his own, and his Lord’s example.

IV. It will be natural to apply the whole to the particular purpose of our being gathered together at this time.

The method directeth us,

I. To set forth the principle expressed in the words of our reading, upon which the apostle formed his own conduct, and foundeth his exhortation to the Corinthians; “not seeking his own, but the profit of others.” And you may take what at this time is necessary upon this head, in the following observations.

1. The principle is benevolence; the desiring the happiness of others, as distinguished from pursuing what might more properly be called our own advantage: distinguished, we say, for between these there is no opposition; they destroy not, but perfectly coincide.

From the beginning, a disposition to take care of ourselves was planted within us: without this we must have been indifferent about our safety, improvement, comfort, or even life itself. It was therefore the first impression God made upon our minds; as we may observe too, that to this principle revelation makes its first addresses, in order to excite us to think of redemption.



tion (*b*). A principle in itself most useful, and, if duly attended to, productive of the best effects; while, by neglecting or acting contrary to its dictates, through indolence or the "service of divers lusts," we render ourselves no less guilty, than when we violate her sister-principle, love and good-will to others, by indulging, what is more commonly allowed to be, criminal selfishness.

Indeed between these two there is no more real discord, than between any other distinct appetites implanted in us: on the contrary, in the proper exertion of each, in their several just spheres, a mutual beauty and aid is produced: both are alike laws, proceeding from the same God who formed us, and are equally universal and binding.

Even matter itself, we observe, is under the law of gravity; and its distinct parts tend to union by mutual attraction. Thus it is known, that, though at great distances, the heavenly bodies move, first round their own, and then, in wondrous concord, about another centre, common to all, for general harmony and use. Again,

The humblest plant we tread under foot, after seeking its own nourishment from what surrounds it, shoots forth its leaves and fruit for the support of other creatures. Animals of the least sensibility, after gathering what God hath provided for their own sustenance, naturally crouch, or otherwise lend their service to man; while the more generous are tamed for his greater comfort or use. The spirit is universal and reciprocal; it breathes through all, and, under the impenetrable agency of the Most High, is the bond by which the numberless individuals in the creation are held together and consist.

(*b*) See Matth. vi. 33.; x. 28.; xvi. 25. 26. 27.; Acts ii. 38. 39. 40.; iii. 19. 23.

In this spirit, was man, the chief of the works of God, in this part of his universe, remarkably framed. Suitably to his particular nature, the first and great commandment given him, was, “to love the Lord his God with all his heart; and the second like to it was, “to love his neighbour as himself.” Himself, as fit, was the first object of his care; his neighbour’s good, according to that standard, was next to be desired; and, in the gratification of this last propensity, a satisfaction no less real was to be found, than in that of the former. It must have been thus, in regard the nature of the great Lord who formed him, is love. “God is love,” and he delighteth in all the acts of it. “Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights (c).” His family in the earth and in the heavens is surely beyond our reckoning; but he alone kindly, as well as powerfully, sustains and provides for them all. The eyes of all things wait upon him, the giver of all good (d). “He is good, and doth good to all.” This, then, being God’s own nature, the spring and rule of his conduct, he must have formed us in this manner; as it is inconceivable he should frame us after any other image than his own, wherein he hath perfect complacency; invariably shewing it by his goodness to all, and exalting his tender mercies above all his other works.

Hence it is, that, in acts of love to others, we experience that ease and delight, so peculiar to the creatures of God, when answering the purposes for which he framed them. This was the “goodness he beheld in them, when, having finished all his works, he rested, “and was refreshed (e).” Thus the eye looks, with ease and satisfaction, upon its objects. We find it pleasant to behold the sun. The ear, receiving sounds, is delight-

(c) James i. 17.      (d) Ps. cxlv. 15.      (e) Exod. xxxi. 17.  
ed;

ed; as the feet and hands move agreeably to the purposes for which they were intended.

But no part of our frame, with more ease or pleasure, addresses itself to fulfil the ends of its creation, than the soul, set in motion by love, performs its several acts of kindness.

This then was the blessed balance originally established in our souls, according to the first and great commandment, and the second, which is like unto it, loving God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves: a constitution the most wonderfully calculated for dignity, beauty, usefulness, and felicity.

2. It was by transgression, when an infinite God, the fountain of living waters, in whom unenvied plenty was to be found for all, was forsaken by man, and his happiness sought from the creatures, in the indulgence of his own little and private passions, that this blessed balance in his soul was broken. Other divine principles, of reverence, dependence, hope, and desire towards God, as well as a concern for the welfare of others, were then swept away. Of this sad unhinging of our frame, many foolish and hurtful lusts, robbing the soul of true peace, were the miserable effects.

The error was great. The creature even at first was not intended to convey full happiness to the soul of man; much less is it able to do it now, because the creature itself is for our sins subjected to vanity, that is, made unfit to give even that subordinate degree of satisfaction it was at first framed for. Nor can any attempt, how oft soever repeated, or wisely conducted, produce the desired joy to us.

Yet man not perceiving his error, or being obstinately averse from returning to what the divine wisdom had contrived for his only true happiness, the love of God, and others, as well as of himself, anxiously turns about to all that is in the world for it, in the indulgence



gence of “the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or “the pride of life (*f*);” covetousness, sensuality, vain honour, and ambition amongst men, the “pleasures he “loves more than God.”

In this pursuit too man is violent. The whole force of the soul, which originally was intended to be set upon the divine favour, and seeking the good of others, being collected to attain this one end, of finding satisfaction in the gratification of the lusts of his flesh and mind, makes his desires and endeavours eager, by these means, to accomplish it.

And his attempts are various, both on account of the different channels in which self seeks to be gratified, and the necessity of renewing the trials from frequent disappointments. Self-interest, ease, pleasure, opinion, worth, righteousness, honour, and applause, with many other narrow pursuits of the same kind, are the paths wherein men now wander to please their souls on earth.

Besides, the competitors being many, about objects so confined, the little divided prizes can be gained but by few: envy, consequently, and malice, fraud, anger, and revenge, the natural fruit of anxious and disappointed self, are produced amongst us. Hence the description, from the oracles of God, of the universal state of mankind: “We ourselves were sometimes foolish, “deceived, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another (*g*).” Evil passions not only hurtful to the immediate objects of them, but which give a just recompense of painful reward to those who indulge them, and when most ardently, nay successfully pursued, administer disquiet and torment; the reverse of that blessed ease, tranquillity, and peace, which, by

(*f*) 1 John ii. 16. 17.

(*g*) Tit. iii. 3.

our continuing in divine love, and its pure and benevolent effects, we should for ever have enjoyed.

Indeed, notwithstanding this great and universal deviation to wicked selfishness, from love to God and men, such reverence to this principle of benevolence still remains in the world, that there is not any thing on earth of such universal good report. The legislators have necessarily interwoven its public spirit into their systems, historians have recorded its honours, poets have sung its praise ; nay, from this the most envious and selfish themselves cannot “always” withhold their niggardly approbation. And the love of its good fame hath not seldom occasioned men truly selfish, unregenerate to God and his love, in many instances, to mimic its kind acts, while yet their reigning principle of self hath been at bottom in all.

3. It is in the regeneration, according to the mercy and truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that this spirit of corrupted selfishness and its concomitant evils can only and fully be done away, and the lost image of the God of love, with all its happy fruits, be restored to our souls ; not restored only, but carried to new and formerly unknown heights.

This regeneration is every where in scripture ascribed to God himself. Our first quickening to life was, and could only be of his operation : and he alone who gave that first quickening, can again restore it when lost, nay when alienation from it reigns within us. He only who knoweth his own nature, can reveal it to us, or when revealed, transform our souls according to it. Therefore in divine language it is said, that “he who  
“commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath  
“shined in our hearts, to give the light of the know-  
“ledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus  
“Christ (*b*) ;” so that, “we with open face beholding

(*b*) 2 Cor. iv. 6.

“ as

“ as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into  
 “ the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of  
 “ the Lord (*i*).” And this is true regeneration, when,  
 by the Holy Ghost, the truth of the divine glory, manifested by Jesus Christ to men, is shed abroad in our hearts, captivating every thought, and forming all within us after the divine image. So do the truly regenerate describe their own state: “ And we have known  
 “ and believed the love that God hath to us. God is  
 “ love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God,  
 “ and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect,  
 “ that we may have boldness in the day of judgment:  
 “ because as he is, so are we in this world. — We  
 “ love him; because he first loved us. If a man say, I  
 “ love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. —  
 “ And this commandment have we from him, that he  
 “ who loveth God, love his brother also (*k*).” He who knoweth these things is born again. The image of God wherein he at first was formed, is restored, and corrupted narrow selfishness destroyed. When by this truth divine grace takes possession of the soul, the deformity of corrupted self in every view, as robbing God of his glory, and our brethren of that kindness which is due to them, is beheld with abhorrence, and as a law in our members bringing us into the captivity of every sin, as well as death, is brought down. And it is the work of the same grace ever after, by the exercise of faith and fear, hope and confidence, to carry forward the hearts of the redeemed to the perfection of this love, making them more than conquerors at last over this evil principle, often rising in the soul, and striving, by different handles of natural tempers, worldly interests, and many other deceits, to recover its dominion.

And who among you, my dear friends, have known what it is to be born again of the Spirit, and have ta-

(*i*) 2 Cor. iii. 18.

(*k*) 1 John iv. 16. 17. 19. 20. 21.



sted that the Lord is gracious, who will not bear witness to the truth of this doctrine? After your first transports of admiration, thanksgiving, and delight in God, and in his Son, for thus loving you, you were directly taught, by the divine influence then moving in your souls, to turn your compassions to others. Spontaneous flowings of heart you felt for like blessings to them, as you yourselves had become partakers of. No more contracted within your own narrow bosoms, not even to relatives and friends (that little circle) was your care confined: for strangers, for known, for unknown, and (while indignation and zeal against sin abated not) for the greatest transgressors, were your bowels moved. In particular, for adversaries you felt tenderly. God for Christ's sake had forgiven you; you saw the glory, you experienced the joy, you would be like your God; you therefore forgave the highest injuries, and cried to him who had blotted out your transgressions for his name's sake, to pardon theirs. The true children of God by Jesus Christ, were the objects of a complacency heretofore unknown. They were beloved by you for the Father's sake: you saw them to be the men for whom Christ died; they were become temples of the Holy Ghost, and joint heirs with yourselves of the same everlasting inheritance: upon these great accounts they were your delight, as the excellent ones of the earth; and, by doing the will of your heavenly Father, became as your brother, and sister, and mother. Nay, in perceiving the love of Christ in laying down his life for them, you could even lay down your lives for such brethren; and longed for the blessed day when all this love being made perfect should cast out fear, and have an endless reign and joy among the general assembly above, knit together in indissoluble bonds, to God and the Lamb for ever and ever. Affections new, as are a parent's bowels upon receiving  
his

his first-born, were in the day of your regeneration felt by you ! Passions formerly unconquerable were brought into the obedience of Christ ! and acts of love before impossible, were perfected within you !

No rod bent by outward force, when disengaged from its holdings, more eagerly returns to its first straight state ; no bird after confinement more joyfully resumes its wings in flight, than our souls, set free by the grace of the gospel from that sad captivity wherein they were held to narrow guilty selfishness, return to God, and the objects of love he sets before us ; clearly shewing, that our first frame was love, as love in its full perfection is that image to which the Father of spirits and God of love would now again renew us, by the tender mercies of the gospel of Jesus Christ, his Son.

When thus born again from above, as our love to this heavenly Father is supreme, so love to others, the reverse of selfishness and crooked envy, becomes our heart's next warmest motion. To excellence in others it is approbation ; to their prosperity, complacency. It defraudeth none, oppresseth none ; on the contrary, to sorrow it is comfort, to weakness strength, eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, counsel to the simple and the wandering. To the needy it is bounty, to the distressed sympathy without reserve, and relief sometimes beyond its power. It suffereth long, and is kind, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, seeketh not its own, is not easily provoked, deviseth not evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity which ruineth, but in the truth which saveth men.

Such is the spirit breathed from God into his new-born children by the gospel. Much is it to be regretted, that it appears so little in those who call themselves Christians : but this changeth not the nature of Christianity. Many such heavenly fruits have appeared in the world by its influence, and will always appear in exact proportion as men are under its power. This is



pure and undefiled religion, the first and last perfection of our natures; most pleasant to behold in others, delightful to feel in our own hearts, more so to be exerted by us. For, according to the true spirit of this love, most justly expressed by those lips it suited so well to utter it, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

II. We are now led to consider how this divine love which was in the apostle, exerted itself. Its object was well chosen: "I seek the profit of others, that they might be saved."

A disposition to succour in distress, and to communicate happiness, is, as we have already seen, the breathing of love. Its condescension stoops to the lowest object; nor doth its humility disdain the meanest office, to produce its kind effects. A prison will be visited, a cup of cold water administered, when these are called for to alleviate a present or temporary affliction. But there are greater objects found amongst men for the exercise of this divine affection.

Who can say, that this earth, which God hath given to man, should not be improved? the wide ocean so fitted for commerce, not employed to convey the produce of distant countries, for the mutual benefit of the inhabitants of different nations? that the various talents and abilities wherewith God hath endued men, should not be encouraged and exerted to the advancement of every laudable art and science, when thereby the general happiness of mankind is promoted? Humanity may, in these things, be much engaged, and far extended: and when the Christian so beholds it, he is ready to be affected, as our Lord was with respect to the young rich man in the gospel, concerning whom it is written, "And Jesus beholding him, loved him." But when in the earth in general, and in his own country,



try, he observes, that, in the midst of all this, "one great thing is lacking;" alas! more than lacking; that this prosperity destroys foolish men; and that, instead of the goodness of God leading to repentance, God is thereby the more forgot, his unsearchable riches, displayed for salvation, neglected; and impiety, irreligion, luxury, and vice in every view increased; what can he do, but breathe a sigh over the fruitful fields of the fast improving country, and over the city of stirs, the joyous city, where the sound of the harp and the viol ceaseth not, and every dissipating amusement reigns; while the awful words of his Lord is brought to his remembrance, "(1) And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark: and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded: but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all: Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed?"

Indeed, to suppose the best, grant that, in our pursuit of earthly things, the goodness of God were not so unhappily made, through our corruption, the occasion of our forgetting the great giver of it; that we thereby made less provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts; and had less reason to dread the expected appearance of our Lord, to take vengeance for the abuse of this kindness; and farther admit, that humanity carried its spirit far amongst us: still would it, as a principle of action, fall short of divine love. And the same

(1) Luke xvii. 26.—30.

offices, as inspired by the one and the other, would be different in their beauty, their dignity, and joy.

Where-ever God is, there is a majesty to which nothing else can rise; and in whatever heart or action he is regarded, a superiority is felt. Religion, therefore, and divine love, seeking the profit of others in whatsoever way, doing all their works in regard to him; — to his authority commanding, and his love constraining; give an elevation above human compassion, and its best fruits; and while they banish not, highly improve this amiable principle: so that the same sympathy with poverty, reproach, or pain; the same cloathing of the naked, or feeding the hungry, becoming the widow's shield, or orphan's stay; the same kind acts of private friendship, or endeavours to advance public prosperity, as flowing from mere humanity, or dictated by regards to the Most High, are very different. There is a nobleness and beauty in the last, which the former can lay no claim to.

But Christians look higher than to these things, in the benevolence of their hearts to men; "that they may be saved," saith the apostle. It is not food, nor raiment, nor human greatness, nor the delicate pleasure of the most refined arts on earth, that is here the object of his good wishes to men. It is the welfare of their souls: and, if we reflect in the slightest manner on their value, we shall approve of his love, in thus seeking, above all things, their profit.

The souls of men are the chief workmanship of God on earth, and of kin to the noblest spirits above. By many considerations their worth hath often been shewn, whether as considered in their own intrinsic excellence, or in the comparison between them, and whatever else hath been esteemed and loved by men on earth. Your time, at present, allows me to mention only the following considerations upon this part of the subject.



It were enough, surely, to say, our souls must be valuable, because God, the best judge of the worth of his creatures, hath shewn such distinguished respect and kindness to them. But this will more abundantly appear, if we remember, that, after he had finished his other works on earth, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion (*m*):" than which, surely, nothing, in regard to creatures, can be said higher. Different degrees, we allow, may be in this resemblance; but whatever is possessed of what is certainly included in the expression, is of high rank in creation. Made after God's image! like to him who is the only Excellent, the only Potentate, the only Blessed! For in all these views was man made after the image of God. And the reverence which on this great account God himself instructs us he would have paid to him, is in this striking manner expressed, in the sanction of that law he made for his preservation: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man (*n*)."  
 To have this image in knowledge, holiness, and dominion; to be framed capable of loving, and of being beloved of God, as dear children; of serving, and being blessed by him in reward; to have, on that account, a capacity of exquisite sensibility in all his frame; to correspond in happiness, or misery, either with his abiding in this blessed state, or falling by transgression from it; these are great things to be said of any creature; and man must be valuable as they belong to him.

So much the rather that he is immortal. At present, we discuss not the subtilties of the celebrated argument, for the immortality of our souls, as inseparable from their immaterial substance. Nor is it needful we rest this great point upon its unsatisfying issue. Neither

(*m*) Gen. i. 26.

(*n*) Ib. ix. 6.



shall we enlarge upon other very plausible and comfortable presumptions, which have been offered upon this subject. It may well suffice, that he, who only hath life and immortality in himself, and who, doubtless, hath power, on the one hand to bring to nought, or on the other to continue in endless life, any creature or work of his own hand he pleaseth, hath brought this his determined purpose to light, that not our souls only, but, after a glorious resurrection, our bodies too, shall die no more. How valuable a creature then is man! We are lost in the endless prospect of our existence. What, in comparison, are earths, and moons, and suns, and stars, of whatever outward magnificence, splendour, or duration! In the balance they are light as air. In this sure prospect may the humblest persons, whom the Son of God at first created after his Father's image, and hath now redeemed, unto whom he hath said, "Because I live, ye shall live also," rejoice while they contemplate the longest lived, and most durable works of creation, and may allude to the triumphant song belonging to their Lord, and say with transport, "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of  
 " the earth : and the heavens are the work of thy hands.  
 " They shall perish, but we shall endure : yea, all of  
 " them shall wax old as a garment ; as a vesture shalt  
 " thou change them, and they shall be changed, but—  
 " our years shall have no end (o)."

All this is greatly heightened by our capacity to advance, and to be enlarged, during our immortality, to a degree now unknown. To illustrate this, we may observe in all the creatures of God, a tendency to grow to a certain pitch of perfection originally intended for them. The small seed that is cast naked into the ground, springeth up, "first the blade, then the ear,  
 " after that the full corn in the ear (p)," till it ripens

(o) Psal. cii. 25.—27.

(p) Mark iv. 28.

manifold for the harvest. The stately oak we now admire, was once a little acorn; and when in its noblest spread, the growth of many seasons, it is but the embryo extended. In like manner, our infant thoughts, by the instruction and improvements that are found upon earth, are capable of, and sometimes do shoot up to many and great ideas. But as children cannot comprehend what in manhood they shall arrive at; so neither surely can we, in these our first days, our infancy of regeneration, know what in eternity shall be attained. This obvious and striking image we find made use of by the apostle, to illustrate this subject. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known (a).”

Had Adam continued innocent, he would have been the measure of that perfection to which his posterity would have risen, and beyond which they could not have gone. High, no doubt, that must have been, in knowledge, honour, and felicity: but still would it have been beneath what, in a proper sense, is heavenly; God having made him “a little lower than the angels (b).” But Christians have a perfection set before them, in a promised resemblance to Jesus Christ, their new head, far above whatever that could have been. “The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have born

(a) 1 Cor. xiii. 9.—12.

(b) Psal. viii. 5.



“ the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image  
 “ of the heavenly (*a*).” To illustrate this, let it be  
 considered, that

Jesus Christ, in his human nature, was first a child ;  
 an infant of thoughts, as well as days : “ The child  
 “ grew, and waxed strong in spirit (*b*).” And again,  
 “ He grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with  
 “ wisdom. He increased in wisdom and stature ; and  
 “ the grace of God was upon him (*c*).” In process of  
 time, the Spirit without measure came upon him, and  
 the enlargement of his human soul was accordingly.  
 And now the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily  
 in him, his human nature is become the seat of all di-  
 vine knowledge and glory, and the medium of convey-  
 ing these and all their blessed effects to us. And when  
 we remember what is written by the apostle John,  
 “ Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth  
 “ not yet appear what we shall be : but we know  
 “ that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for  
 “ we shall see him as he is (*d*).” As our Lord him-  
 self also saith to his Father, “ The glory which thou  
 “ hast given me, I have given them : that they may  
 “ be one, even as we are one (*e*);” we may justly cry out,  
 How great is the goodness the Lord hath laid up for  
 them that fear him ! How spiritual in body, how di-  
 vine in soul shall man in his immortality become, when  
 thus made like the Son of God for ever ! How noble  
 the aim, then, to seek the profit of such ? infinitely su-  
 perior to whatever else hath been named, as an object of  
 benevolence and ambition among men. Which will still  
 be more evident, if we consider,

2. That the apostle’s words, “ that they may be sa-  
 “ ved,” certainly include a present state of loss ; since

(*a*) 1 Cor. xv. 47.—49.

(*b*) Luke i. 80.

(*c*) Ib. ii. 40. 52.

(*d*) 1 John iii. 2.

(*e*) John xvii. 22.



the word "salvation" plainly conveys an idea of restoration to what is in that condition. And so he indeed, who was best acquainted with our present situation, interprets it, by saying, "I am come to seek, and to save that which was lost (*a*)."

The least hurt to a being so truly excellent as man, is much to be lamented. We often observe a single calamity, when remarkably striking, though but earthly and temporary, producing general and high distress. The ruin of a beloved friend, or child, or husband, hath not unfrequently thrown into distraction, or been a weight which hath sunk down the afflicted to the grave. And if, in particular instances, there can be such painful sympathies, to what account can it be placed, but to the insensibility of death itself in spiritual things, that we are not moved to exquisite distress, when we hear it revealed from heaven, that all our race are, by transgression against God, involved in a state, only to be described, by its being said, — "they are lost?"

Lost! our souls, our immortal souls lost! to what lost? to every person, and great purpose for which they were intended; to the most high God, by dishonouring and offending, instead of pleasing and glorifying him; to our fellow-creatures and brethren, by hurting, instead of proving useful to them in their best concerns; to ourselves, by depravation and self-destruction, in place of excelling and acquiring true happiness.

Moreover, all this being the sad fruit of inexcusable guilt in the sight of a holy and righteous God, it cannot be without his indignation, and its heavy effects. And so it is written, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men (*b*); and, "The soul that sinneth shall die (*c*). And if this indignation and death (as some have unwarrantably said) were only the daily expiring

(*a*) Luke xix. 10. (*b*) Rom. i. 18. (*c*) Gen. ii. 17.; Ezek. xviii. 4.

we are witnesses of, it were much to be regretted, that such should be the lot, the universal lot of the whole race of mankind. But is it, indeed, the loss of the breath of this life alone, which is in these threatenings? No! doubtless the whole man, which had transgressed, is affected by them, and principally that immortal spirit within, which gave the wilful and presumptuous direction to the outward man, to be the instrument of its iniquity: and therefore, as from the beginning this instrument was justly subjected to death, so shame before the offended God, and dread of his displeasure, were, from the moment of transgression, the miserable torment of the real criminal, the soul within.

To the anguish and bitterness of this death, we may now be insensible, as it is a part of our unhappiness by sin, both in the natural course of things, and by the divine judgment permitting it, that, for a season, we should be under the influence of ignorance, and listlessness to what is spiritual. And so are we described by the Holy Ghost, when Christ came to redeem us; “The day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give  
“light to them that sit in darkness, and the shadow  
“of death(*a*);” that “sit” in darkness, contented and unalarmed, in ignorance of their true state, when within the verge of extreme ruin and death.

Far from this insensibility was the Son of God when he came to save us. His life was a life of sorrows: he was acquainted with grief. By day, abounding iniquity, and the obstinacy and contradiction of sinners against himself, and the salvation he was bringing from his Father, bowed him down. By night, strong crying and tears, marred his countenance more than any man’s. As his hour approached, he was confounded and knew not what to say; was sorrowful unto death; and at last, being numbered amongst transgressors by men, hum-

(*a*) Luke i. 78. 79.



bled under the buffetings of Satan, in agony under the forsaking of his heavenly Father, he gave up the ghost; that we might be accounted worthy to escape that awful wrath for sin, which we were neither able to deliver ourselves from, nor support ourselves under.

Whence then come these different situations of Christ and us, with regard to transgression? he, the holy and just One, and his Father's beloved, when bringing us to God, under agonizing distress, even to death; we, the really guilty, insensible and at ease? Whence, but from this; that Jesus was perfectly acquainted with the holiness and righteousness of him with whom evil cannot dwell, and the power of his anger against it; we, though justly meriting that anger, blind in our minds, and hardened in our hearts, against fear, on account of it? But our being so, changeth not the nature of things; least of all what is so unchangeable with God, his being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; nor disannulleth his purpose, to cause them utterly to perish, who, in his holy judgment, shall finally be found guilty of it.

But, my dear friends, are these things realities? in very deed is such the situation of immortal men, fallen from God by iniquity? and do the accounts proceed from God himself, the "holy and true (*a*)," and from his Son Jesus Christ, who hath "testified to men, what " he hath seen and heard of his Father (*b*)?"

We have heard the severities of God in the sufferings of Christ, and punishment of sin amongst men, vindicated as proper, and of excellent use to support the divine government in the world. We admit the reason, and have ground to believe, (as it is infinitely fit it should be so), that the whole universe of God is influenced hereby (*c*). But we would still keep this good reason of these afflictions in its own place, as secondary and

(*a*) Rev. vi. 10.      (*b*) John viii. 26.      (*c*) Eph. iii. 10.

subordinate;



subordinate; while, as the high truth, we would assert, that as it is the great use of all the works of God, to manifest his invisible glory (*a*); so, in particular, this his highest possible act of government, in “pleasing to bruise his own Son, to put him to grief, when he made his soul an offering for sin (*b*),” did shew forth what really is his holy and righteous, as well as his merciful nature, before all in heaven and earth (*c*). “The earth,” thus beheld by the most exalted spirits above, “is full of his glory (*d*).” And this is the glass, wherein, as with open face, Christians behold the divine glory, where they are transformed into its image (*e*). We would say, that in no instance hath the most wise God occasion, in the government of his creatures, to hold out false colours, either to allure or awe them to his subjection; nor to raise in them false impressions, or deceitful feelings; to answer ends which could not, by the power of the truth itself, be accomplished among them: that therefore he never declared himself more holy and just than he really was; nor ever annexed a sanction to a law, by threatening, which was not just, and which, when incurred, was not righteous in him to execute: and in particular, when Christ, though a Son, endured the cross, as our second Adam, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, he “ought to have suffered these things (*f*):” As, in like manner, and displaying the same glory, when the last judgment shall be finished, and the sentence passed upon the guilty, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,” the song shall righteously ascend from all the holy ones of God, “Just and true are thy ways, O King of saints! Who shall not fear thee, O Lord! and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy (*g*).”

(*a*) Rom. i. 19. 20.; Acts xvii. 24. &c.; Psal. viii.

(*b*) Is. liii. 10.

(*c*) Eph. iii. 10.; Is. vi. init.

(*d*) Is. vi. 3.; Rev. iv. 8.—11.

(*e*) 2 Cor. iii. 18.; Rom. iii. 25. 26.

(*f*) Luke xxiv. 26.

(*g*) Rev. xv. 3. 4.

These things being so, how is man lost by sin ! Say but the half, the least part of this poor representation of these our deep concerns, was true ; what are all the ruins and wrecks, over which the eye of man hath mourned, or his heart been sad, when compared to this ? If upon any desolations in this world, the “ earth ” is said “ to languish, Lebanon to be ashamed, and hewn “ down, Sharon to become a wilderness, Bashan and Carmel to shake off their fruits (a) ; ” or higher still, upon such occasions, is “ the sun ” said to “ be darkened, the “ moon to with-hold her light, the stars to fall, and the “ powers of the heaven to be shaken (b) ? ” is Jeremiah to be admired, when calamities came upon his nation, that he wished “ his head were waters, and his eyes a “ fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night “ for the slain of his people (c) ; ” or, upon an after threatened desolation, do we justify Mordecai, “ rending “ his cloaths, putting on sackcloth with ashes, and going “ into the midst of the city, even to the king’s gate, “ crying with a loud and bitter cry (d) ? ” what anxiety and grief shall we find proportioned to this vast and endless ruin from God himself, so merited by our sin, and in due time so certainly to be executed in a second death, from which there is no deliverance, but where miserable man must “ pay the uttermost farthing (e) ? ” If from the bitterness of this death a deliverance is possible, how great indeed is the profit, and how well chosen the benevolence pointed that way ? Which brings us to say,

3. That from this loss there may be a recovery ; “ that they may be saved,” saith the apostle.

It is the intention of Christ, in coming to the world, and of all the scriptures, which testify of him, to declare this grace ; that by him, according to the mercy of

(a) Is. xxxiii. 9.

(b) Esth. iv. 1. 2.

(c) Jer. ix. 1.

(d) Matth. xxiv. 29.

(e) Matth. v. 26.



his Father, men may be saved. And no wonder this salvation is said to be "great (a)." Every thing that enters into the notion of greatness, is found in it.

An alleviation in ordinary calamities comforteth ; but where the ruin is vast and total, alleviation is not regarded. The deliverance must be perfect, else the grief assuageth not. The wife of Phinehas, when the ark of God was taken, her father-in-law and husband killed, was told of the birth of her son, and bid "not to fear ; she answered not, neither did she regard it. " She named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is " departed from Israel (b)." Thus must it have been with lost man, had his redemption not been complete, (so immense is his ruin by transgression), when he should have become truly sensible of it. But his salvation is perfect ; the greatest possible to man, the greatest ever God bestowed. The depths of all his counsels, the heights of all his grace, the energy of all his power, the riches of all his bounty, the manifestation of all his glory, are here ; nothing is with-held, or left undone. The love passeth all knowledge ; and whatever that could dictate, or his own Son achieve, or his Spirit influence, from the depths of slavery and death, to the heights of liberty and life eternal, is accomplished for this redemption.

Before this salvation is revealed, the preparations are exceeding great, paving the way for its appearance in our world. In description, all nature, all within the knowledge of man, is ransacked to set forth its beauty, greatness, and excellence. On account of transgression the world had been brought under a curse ; but in the view of this salvation, " the earnest " expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God ; because the creature " itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of

(a) Heb. ii. 3.

(b) 1 Sam. iv. 20. &c.

" corruption



“ corruption, into the glorious liberty of these sons (a).” In the mean time, “ in the wilderness waters are  
 “ said to break out, and streams in the desert, the  
 “ parched ground to become a pool, and the thir-  
 “ sty land springs of water (b).” “ The heavens re-  
 “ joice, the earth is glad, the seas roar, and the floods  
 “ clap their hands. All the trees of the wood, the  
 “ field and all that is therein rejoiceth (c).” “ The  
 “ mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills  
 “ shall flow with milk, and a fountain shall come forth  
 “ of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley  
 “ of Shittim (d).” The glory of Lebanon is given  
 “ to it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they  
 “ shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency  
 “ of our God (e).” “ The wolf also shall dwell with  
 “ the lamb; and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all  
 “ God’s holy mountain (f).”

Moreover, “ the light of the moon shall be as the  
 “ light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be  
 “ sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day  
 “ that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his peo-  
 “ ple (g).” “ For behold, I create new heavens,  
 “ and a new earth: and the former shall not be re-  
 “ membered, nor come into mind. But be you glad  
 “ and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for be-  
 “ hold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a  
 “ joy (h).”

To these figures in description were added many types, and signs, and prophecies, raising expectation high concerning the great thing set forth by them. In subserviency to this, the other important affairs of providence in the world were carried on. Wonderful favours

(a) Rom. viii. 19. 21.

(b) Is. xxxii. 15.

(c) Psal. xcvi. penult.

(d) Joel iii. 18.

(e) Is. xxxii. 2.

(f) Is. xi. 6. 9.; chap. lxxv. 25.

(g) Ib. xxx. 26.

(h) Ib. lxxv. 17.

and preservations were vouchsafed to one peculiar people, among whom this redemption was to appear; while the rise and fall of many other kingdoms were in connection, or shadows of what belonged to this great event.

When the fulness of time for its manifestation came, however unattracting to men, seeking after splendid signs, or false science; though little suited to the wisdom, or the carnal views of this world, either in former or latter ages; yet to those whose eyes are open to discern what is truly excellent, and whose hearts are prepared to judge what is true wisdom, it appears far above  
 “ whatever eye had seen, or ear had heard, or heart of  
 “ man had formerly conceived, even the hidden wisdom,  
 “ which God before the world had ordained unto  
 “ our glory (*a*).”

They observe men, when this salvation comes into the world, “ walking in a vain and evil course, according  
 “ to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that  
 “ worketh in the children of disobedience; fulfilling the  
 “ desire of the flesh, and of the mind (*b*); walking in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquettings, and abominable idolatries (*c*); aliens from the  
 “ commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; having no hope, and without  
 “ God in the world (*d*).” This is the scripture-account of the ancient world, to which all other history agrees; as indeed doth the present state of those dark parts of the earth, which are full of the habitations of cruelty; where men are found, men capable of the divine image, and who hereafter are to stand before the awful judgment-seat of God, to receive a final sentence for eternity; leading a life scarcely above that of the beasts of the field they hunt for prey: as in other countries, where society, and the arts of life, have had long foot-

(*a*) 1 Cor. ii. 7. 9.

(*b*) Eph. ii. 2. 3.

(*c*) 1 Pet. iv. 3.

(*d*) Eph. ii. 12.



ing, but where this revelation hath not spread its light and influence; with regard to the true God, his worship, and service, and whatever belongs to the great concerns of an eternal state, deep ignorance, and the most deplorable idolatry and sin, prevail.

In a situation so forlorn, who can sufficiently admire and value the gospel of Jesus Christ, visiting men with light in the midst of darkness? It is a kingdom, that though it cometh not with observation, yet doth it in reality contain the most clear, certain, and comfortable knowledge of our dearest and most important interests.

Here only are given true and distinct views of the spirituality, the holiness, righteousness, mercy, and faithfulness of the great God with whom we have to do. A foundation is laid in a divine propitiation for pardon and reconciliation to us guilty men, and, by a strange manner of love, for a new and higher sonship to God, than we were at first honoured with. By this gospel we are directed to a heavenly, sublime, and acceptable worship, through a great High Priest, who is already passed into the heavens, and is there accepted and glorified of God his Father. Herein also we see our Redeemer exalted, to all power in heaven and earth, for his body's sake the church; able thereby to uphold this kingdom, and all who belong to it, to the end; and to make all things work together for good to his redeemed. Here do we find a gift; not the renewing man's spirit only, that candle of the Lord, which at his creation was given to guide him; but the Holy Ghost, now purchased and sent down from on high, for the most necessary and best purposes; even to quicken, purify, uphold, comfort, and bless the people of this kingdom. By him they are delivered from their former vain conversation, and from the law of sin in their members. He maketh them free by the truth, that they may no longer fashion themselves according to their former lusts; but as he



who calleth them is holy, so to become holy in all manner of conversation; and every way to prepare them as vessels of mercy for glory. To all these things the hosts of angels above minister; a new union is declared amongst all in heaven and earth, most intimate, dear, and indissoluble; all at last to be winded up in one inexpressibly glorious appearance of God to judgment; when, according to the gospel of this salvation and kingdom, "all nations shall be gathered together (*a*)," to receive an impartial and final sentence for eternity; when new heavens and a new earth shall be brought forth, incomparably more excellent than the present; where the endless day shall be no longer the brightness of a created sun, but the glory shining forth from the God of this salvation, and the Lamb fulfilling it, for ever and ever; and where the night, its just and sad reverse, shall be utter and endless darkness, making the terror beyond conception great.

Can higher things than these enter into the heart of man? or is it exaggeration to say, that the "light of our moon," under the revelation of them, is "as the light of any former sun" for knowledge; and "the light of our sun," or the high enlightenings of the Holy Ghost in their brightness, and comfort to our souls, is "as the shining of seven days," under any former dispensation?

And do we, oh my friends! do we hear the many congratulations to this age, upon the advancement of human learning and arts, which terminate with this present life; and do we observe so much elevation in the few men of taste in these things, (for comparatively few they must ever be), above the common herd of mankind, who are ignorant of them; do we see associations formed, and a spirit raised to propagate and improve in them? and shall not we, who profess to believe

(*a*) Matth. xxv. 31. 32.

in what hath been set forth concerning the redemption of immortal, but lost men, be engaged to seek their profit, in becoming partakers of so vast a mercy; so infinitely superior to every possible possession or refinement upon earth, and that not to be confined to a few, but extended to many? for the more that are interested in this best treasure, it is so much the happier to each individual belonging to it. Which leads,

2. To say, that as we have seen how well chosen the object of the apostle's benevolence was, the salvation of men; we now add, so was that object widely extended in his loving soul; "that many may be saved."

In all respects, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Nor is it the least instance wherein the divine wisdom and kindness hath abounded in our frame, that we are not only capable of enjoying satisfactions more properly our own (*a*); but by our capacity of union with others; in our own, we may be said to be possessed of the advantage of many lives; in as far as, by social and interested communication with the knowledge of others, their love, and their attainments, we enter into their joys, and make them all our own. It is guilty selfishness that hath, and would for ever rob us (as of every other true blessing) of this boundless satisfaction.

Every principle hath its spirit, and pursueth its ends accordingly. Observe the way of degenerate self: it sets out with a care seemingly prudent, to secure the means of subsistence and comfort, against future calamities; but mark how it narrows its confined circle. Against the world in general, it pleads its country; against its country, it pleads its family; against its family, it often pleads itself; and against its present self, it pleads uncertain futurity, denies its very self the cheer

(*a*) Gal. vi. 4.



it hath laboured for, and grudgeth itself comforts, in the vain fear of wanting them, and not seldom starveth in the sad dread of starving. Light, raiment, fuel, food itself have, in the natural course of selfishness, been denied to themselves, by selfish and miserable men abounding in every thing.

Not so the men whom God by his grace hath taught to love. Having been first led to a concern about their own salvation, and to love God for his perfect excellence, as well as grace in Christ Jesus, they find their souls open wider and wider in kind affection to others.

They admire one ray of light, because it is beautiful, whencesoever it proceedeth; but they more admire the sun, because his rays are many and unconfined; because he spreadeth them far and wide, to make multitudes glad with his light, and heat, and kind influence.

They approve of any of their brethren pouring consolation into one bosom; any kind Samaritan, whose compassions bind up the wounds of one distressed, affording wine, and oil, and care, and charges for his relief, refresheth their own bowels: they more admire a Mordecai, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed; because the objects of his benevolence are a multitude, a whole nation: but it is the Christian love, which only and fully gratifieth their souls widely extended in kindness. By this, indeed, they are led to enter into the satisfactions of a whole universe, and their joy is full; "because, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, God gathereth together  
" in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven,  
" and which are in earth, even in him (a)." Wherever the boundless love of God in Christ Jesus goes, in all its "heights, and depths, and breadths, and lengths,"

(a) Eph. i. 10.



there would they follow until they are truly "filled  
" with all the fulness of God (*a*)."

This apostle was a Jew, and knew national attachment and love beyond many; but when God revealed his Son to him, as the Redeemer of "all men without  
" difference," the unfathomable riches of this grace suited his benevolent and loving soul. He triumphed in his deliverance from national fetters, which so violently had held him; he magnified his office, as apostle to all nations; calls upon Christians to hold fast this liberty; nor would he yield subjection, no, not for an hour, to the greatest apostle of the circumcision, pointing at the least thing that tended to cramp this grace. What pleasure doth he take to proclaim Christ, as "Abraham's seed, which was to bless all nations;" and in setting forth, agreeably to this, that it was not "Greek  
" or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian,  
" Scythian, bond or free," that these distinctions were no more; "but Christ was now all, and in all (*b*)!"

Our present context affords a noble illustration of this wide benevolence in Paul. The Jew, the Greek, and the church of God, were concerned in the dispute about idolatrous meats at Corinth; and all might be hurt or profited by his conduct as to that question. He saw the consequences, and the flame of divine love immediately caught hold of his soul: self-denial took place; rather than offend the least, by his eating that flesh, (though he had more knowledge and liberty than them all in that matter), he would chuse "to eat no  
" flesh while the world stood (*c*)."

Nor Jew, nor Gentile, nor the church of God should fall, or be in danger of offence by him. I seek not mine own profit, saith he, I study not my own gratification; "I seek the profit of many," of Jews, of Gentiles, of the church of

(*a*) Eph. iii. 18. 19.

(*b*) Col. iii. 11.

(*c*) 1 Cor. viii. 13.

God; my heart is enlarged in love to all 'denominations of men; my wide arms would comprehend them all in one loving embrace for salvation.

The doctrine of the former head was intended to shew the value of immortal man, and the elevation of benevolence, in seeking so great a profit as his salvation. And, indeed, to save one soul from death, appeared to the apostle James a great matter: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (a)." But in this desiring the salvation of many men, the heart is dilated to its widest dimensions, and is to the utmost gratified and filled.

Happy the bosom where this divine love resides! The possession, you see, is not of one, but of numberless hearts. Nor doth it tire in the exertion, but, like a truly heavenly fountain, wideneth and increaseth in an endless course. What the apostle panted for was eternal salvation; a perfect state of knowledge, honour, holiness, and felicity to a multitude of men which no man can number, heightened to the utmost by the consideration of their merciful escape from absolute misery, and the sad and everlasting continuance of others, through their impenitence, in that wretchedness.

And have we reason and judgment, and shall we not engage them in this deepest concern of ourselves and others? Can our imaginations realize futurities, and shall these prospects we have laid before you not be most in view? Can hopes, and fears, and sympathies be raised by earthly objects, and not in these general and eternal interests of mankind be exerted to the utmost? How is it thus?

What little things do often transport with joy, or

(a) James v. 19. 20.



sink us in the deepest plunge of affliction? between which effects and their causes there is no reasonable proportion. But let us suppose cases where such height of concern could most be justified, or least with-held on earth. Say, we beheld the devouring deep, in its tempests, causing many shipwrecks; an earthquake swallowing up great cities, and their inhabitants; or fire from heaven, as at Sodom, creating consternation and anguish beyond expression. If, in such awful scenes, the utmost concern and activity to deliver (supposing a deliverance but possible) were natural and unavoidable; to what uncommon stupidity is this insensibility, about one another's salvation from wrath to come, to be attributed? that in all other, though incomparably less dangers and troubles of our fellow-men, our bowels are justly and laudably moved, and in this greatest of all their concerns, only unmoved? Or doth the scripture give the right account of it, when it teacheth, that this unaccountable blindness and hardness of heart in man, in these spiritual affairs, is one of the sad fruits of transgression, and of the miserable agency of Satan, who, in holy judgment, is thus permitted, upon account of his rejecting the authority and the mercy of God, to blind him (*a*); whereby his heart, in these matters, hath become deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? or otherwise assign a reason for this conduct (*b*)?

For upon what principle in men is it, if they had only heard such great and interesting things hinted as possible, from any good authority, that they do not universally and with anxiety search into the grounds of the report? whence, if, upon inquiry, the matter appeared but probable, that they can be cool? and whence, above all, when, after the fullest scrutiny, the

(*a*) If. vi. 9.; 2 Cor. iv. 4.

(*b*) Jer. xvii. 9.



persuasion of their reality, as amongst us, is professed, can an apology for indifference be made? Is this like the behaviour of reasonable creatures, or like our conduct in any other thing, where our own or other's interests are concerned on earth? Or rather, would not a similar course, though in matters confessedly of infinitely smaller importance, be deemed the madness of folly, and the guilty judged unworthy of the name of rational men by their fellows?

Were there grounds indeed for infidelity, as to the danger or spiritual redemption we speak of; or could it be proved we were not immortal, to possess either the joys of a resurrection from the dead, and the glory that shall follow, or to endure the anguish of having frustrated the grace of God; an indifference about eternity were, no doubt, justifiable: a noise might be made in the world concerning these things, to answer other purposes, but the wise would justly be unalarmed. But this is the only footing upon which the want of zeal about the salvation of men can be vindicated. For as between such proper infidelity, and the fulness of the faith in Jesus Christ for redemption, there is no just medium; so neither know we of any temper which can be justified, between the absolute carelessness concerning the eternal interests of men, which suits the former, and all the zeal about our own and our brethrens redemption, which, by every bond of God and man, becometh the latter. That such are the sentiments of Christ himself, we know; who, while upon earth, declared, "That  
 " he who was not with him, was against him; and that  
 " he who gathered not with him, scattereth abroad (a)." Thus also, after the fullest manifestation of his own zeal for souls, from the height of his glory, he commanded it to be said to the Laodiceans, "Because you  
 " are neither cold nor hot, I will spue you out of my

(a) Matth. xii. 30.

“mouth (a).” And shall not this be the reason, when at last God finally judgeth us, and upon those very principles too that are planted within us, and by which we pass all our sentences upon one another, (excusing or condemning), that the mouths of many men shall be stopped, and he glorified in their condemnation, for unnatural want of bowels, in not seeking the profit of others, in so great a concern as their eternal salvation? It is thus the “slothful” shall be accounted wicked and unprofitable servants, commanded to be tied hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (b).

And, O! my friends, which of us all may not be touched and humbled here, as very guilty concerning our brethren, if not towards our own souls also! and who amongst us should not give earnest heed to our Lord’s warning to a lukewarm church, “Be zealous, therefore, and repent (c);” and be determined henceforth, where-ever there are men in danger, and men to save, that there, in our different spheres, as God gives us opportunity and power, shall our concern be excited, and our influence exerted! In order to strengthen us in this happy resolution, we proceed to consider,

III. Those examples which the apostle bringeth to enforce his exhortation upon the Corinthians, to seek the profit of many for their salvation. And these are, first, his own; and, secondly, that from whence he learned this his spirit and way, the perfect pattern of Jesus Christ, whose steps they, with himself, were bound as Christians to tread in. For “he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even “as he walked (d).”

All are sensible of the force of example, either to

(a) Rev. iii. 15. 16.

(b) Matth. xxv. 26. 30.

(c) Rev. iii. 19.

(d) 1 John ii. 6.



what is good or evil. Few there are in the world upon whom it hath not influence. Instruction is thereby more easily, as well as strongly, conveyed than by precept, though under the clearest teaching and the best adapted address. What is called for, is beheld practicable, our disposition for society and imitation gratified, and our emulation excited. The recommendation in every view is superior, as a living original is to a picture; which, however finely executed, is still without actual and real life. As the apostle was deeply concerned that the Corinthians should be filled with this spirit of disinterested good-will for the salvation of one another, he allowed not his argument to want this force: In this, saith he, "be ye imitators of me;" take me for your pattern.

Egotism, or the mentioning one's self or doings, is ordinarily a vain and disagreeable thing. This the apostle knew, and often calls it folly (*a*); that is, it is the action of a foolish man: yet sometimes it is necessary, sometimes beautiful. How extremely, for instance, was it so in himself, when Festus imputed madness to him, whilst he made that apology, which almost persuaded Agrippa to become a Christian? "Would to God," said he, "that all here, were not only almost, but altogether such as I am, except these bonds (*b*)."  
And, upon this occasion too, when he would have the Corinthians delivered from mean and destructive selfishness, and enlarged to true and divine benevolence, in "seeking the profit of many, that they might be saved;" sensible of the importance of his exhortation, and desirous to fail in nothing that might be of use to incline them to yield to it, he adds the weight of example to his former arguments: and in full consciousness of the purity of his own conduct in this view, a conduct too with which they were well ac-

(*a*) 2 Cor. xi. 16. 23.

(*b*) Acts xxvi. 19.



quainted, by his long abode among them; willing also to avail himself of that right to consideration, which, as their only spiritual father, he had from them; he recalls to their remembrance his own disinterested and loving behaviour among them, in order to allure them to the like beautiful and heavenly temper; "to seek every man, not his own, but his neighbour's wealth."

The whole of what hath formerly been said, was intended to set forth the excellence of this spirit; and it is now our design to consider the apostle Paul as an eminent example, how far this can be carried into practice and real life, that we may be persuaded to imitate him, in "seeking the profit of many, that they may be saved." Let us then,

1. Observe some previous things about the apostle, over-ruled by God, to produce in him so remarkable a degree of this amiable spirit; and,

2. The various methods in which it was actually exerted in him.

First, We take notice of some previous things about this apostle, which God over-ruled, to produce to an eminent degree the neglecting his own, while he sought "the profit of many others, that they might be saved."

1. It is fit here, first of all, to observe those remarkable strong natural parts wherewith Paul was originally endued. Quick in his apprehension; acute, sagacious, and penetrating in every thing that required judgment; in imagination, ardent; in expression, animated and vigorous; in address to different persons, and in various situations, wise, condescending, and happy; in his whole frame sanguine, yet to all men patient.

God, to whom all his ways are known from the beginning, foreseeing the use he had, in the first days of his gospel, for one so qualified, for this end raised up, and separated Paul from his mother's womb for his service (*a*),

(*a*) Gal. i. 15.

over-

over-ruling other circumstances also, which were proper for his being “a chosen vessel, to bear his name “before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of “Israel (*a*).”

Thus, by birth, it was ordered he should be a Roman (*b*); by blood, an Hebrew of the Hebrews (*c*); that his education should be liberal and learned, as, by his good improvement of it, he profited above many his equals (*d*); that his profession should be of the strictest kind; and himself in that profession, in his own and others eyes, blameless: on all these accounts well known, admired, and much trusted by the chief priests and rulers of his own people (*e*).

2. Again, it was permitted in divine providence, that with these remarkable qualities, and under these seemingly favourable circumstances, he should be found in that situation, which, our Lord had declared, was “farther from the kingdom of God than that of publicans “and harlots (*f*);” farther from the conviction of sin, or whatsoever belongs to true repentance, and farther from that faith in the gospel which is necessary to salvation, than apparently the most abandoned people of the earth. It was so. From all the temper which belonged to his own salvation by Jesus Christ, and from all the benevolence which was necessary to the calling many men to be sharers with him in it, he was at a great distance.

The pride of his own righteousness as an outwardly blameless Pharisee, threw him into a violent opposition to the righteousness of Christ, in his spotless obedience unto death, as what alone pleases his Father for men, staining all the pride of their glorying, while yet it perfectly saves them. The pride of his untainted blood as an Hebrew of the Hebrews, filled him with a con-

(*a*) Acts ix. 15.

(*b*) Ib. xxii. 28.

(*c*) Philip. iii. 5.

(*d*) Gal. i. 14.

(*e*) Acts xxii. 5.

(*f*) Matth. xxi. 31. 32.



tempt of the uncircumcised Gentiles, through a misunderstanding and perversion of the true spirit of the law and the prophets. The natural quickness of his spirit, his intrepidity, his zeal under the direction of such principles, strengthened by the conceit of so much learning, and the flattery of men of the first characters of his own nation and religion, carried him into the most excessive hatred of that name, and that truth, which alone can save men: so that, after having once dipped his hand in the blood of the first martyr Stephen, he is pointed out as the most remarkable destroyer of every person and thing which belonged to Christ or his salvation. "As for Saul," saith Luke, "he made havock  
 " of the church, entering into every house, and haling  
 " men and women, committed them to prison; there-  
 " fore they were scattered abroad (a)." And with this agreeth his own account to Agrippa: "Which thing I  
 " also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I  
 " shut up in prison, having authority from the chief  
 " priests; and when they were put to death, I gave  
 " my voice against them. And I punished them oft in  
 " every synagogue; — and being exceedingly mad a-  
 " gainst them, I persecuted them even to strange ci-  
 " ties (b)." This dreadful spirit had so entered into, and indeed so wholly possessed him, that it seems to have become as his very life; for it is written of him, "And  
 " Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter a-  
 " gainst the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high  
 " priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus, to the  
 " synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether  
 " they were men or women, he might bring them bound  
 " to Jerusalem (c)." In this violent and horrid scene, he was far from being guiltless, notwithstanding his persuasion that he was doing God good service. Hu-

(a) Acts viii. 3.

(c) Ib. ix 1. 2.

(b) Ib. xxvi. 10. 11.



manity was buried by this injurious spirit, nor could any law of God be brought to vindicate such desolations. Indeed he was highly criminal. He, probably, was nearly of the same age with our Lord, and these things fell out about the second year after his death and resurrection. Many circumstances make it clear, that he was not unacquainted either with the facts or evidences of Christianity, which at that period were so public and so extraordinary. He himself could tell Agrippa, "For the king knoweth of these things, before whom I speak freely : for I am persuaded, that none of these things are hidden from him ; for this thing was not done in a corner (a)." Nay more, not long after the time of Paul's violence against the name and brethren of Christ, and his conversion, Peter said to Cornelius, "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all) that word, you know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached ; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power ; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil ; for God was with him (b)." If a stranger then, and a Roman centurion, could be well acquainted with these things ; much more Paul, so inquisitive and zealous about every thing for or against this way. The violence he was guilty of, indeed, was done by him in ignorance and unbelief, which made him pardonable, but that was all. Had he breathed the same spirit, and done the same actions, "knowing" that Jesus was the Christ, "he neither could have been forgiven in this world, nor in that which is to come (c)." Yet this concludes him not innocent. If we are not accountable for the use of our leading fa-

(a) Acts xxvi. 26.

(c) Matth. xii. 32.

(b) Ib. x. 36. 37. 38.

culties, our understanding and judgment, we can be accountable for none of the consequences flowing from their determinations. In particular, Paul's ignorance and unbelief in his circumstances were criminal ; nor can any thing be brought as an apology for them. And these when clothed with blasphemies against the Son of God, with such wide and deep injuries to man, with blood itself, with the blood of those God most loves, and of whom the world was not worthy, and that too, shed for confessing the truth dear to him ; made Paul, as himself afterwards acknowledgeth, a chief transgressor. His humility and self-abasement did not exaggerate his crime, when he said he was " the chief of sinners (a)."

3. It was in this awful situation, that sovereign mercy laid hold upon him, and brought him to call Jesus, LORD ; an act of sovereignty directed by infinite wisdom. What so proper as this high and striking instance of it, to alarm and convince the obstinate Jews persecuting the name of Jesus ? He was known to all their priests and rulers ; known for his learning, his religion, and zeal for their way ; so that, more than twenty years after, he could say at Jerusalem before all, " I am verily a man which am a Jew, — brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous towards God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death ; — as also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders ; from whom I received letters unto the brethren," &c. (b). And so also to Agrippa, " My manner of life from my youth, which was first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning, (if they would testify), that after the most straitest sect of our reli-

(a) 1 Tim. i. 13. 15.

(b) Acts xxii. 3. 4. 5.



“ gion, I lived a Pharisee (a).” For this end, then, to reach a last and extraordinary conviction to the Jews, how wisely did the sovereignty of grace chuse this man to salvation, and conduct the whole manner of his conversion? What possibly can be conceived more adapted to rouse them to a sober and impartial consideration of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to excite in them the faith of his being the true Messiah; or render them more inexcusable, if, after this striking evidence of it, they should still perversely refuse him and his salvation? — On the other hand, who amongst them being convinced, by this conversion, of the truth of Christianity, could despair, by its grace, of obtaining mercy? Which is indeed one reason he himself assigns for his becoming so remarkable an instance of it: “ Howbeit for  
 “ this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus  
 “ Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pat-  
 “ tern to them who should hereafter believe on him to  
 “ life everlasting (b).” How many and wise then were the ends of this gracious dispensation, respecting others?

4. But the conversion of Paul, and the manner of it, as it regarded others, is not the only previous observation we find necessary to make, in order to set our present argument for his benevolence to men in its proper light. It is fit we should add, that the effects were the highest possible for exciting this blessed temper in himself; as will be evident, if we consider,

1. That every thing which opposed this divine disposition in his soul, was thereby cast out; while those principles which lead to the tenderest love to others, were established within him.

By the discoveries that were made him, in his conversion, of the riches of the grace of God as the only source of his salvation, and of the righteousness of Jesus Christ his Son, as what alone could make him accepted in the

(a) Acts xxvi. 4. 5.

(b) 1 Tim. i. 16.



fight of his holy Father, he was effectually humbled, and emptied of all the pride of his own knowledge and righteousness, which heretofore had exalted him in his own eyes, while he despised others. Once he thought himself to be something; now was he effectually taught, “ he was nothing (*a*);” that “ in his flesh dwelt no “ good thing (*b*);” that “ no flesh could now glory in “ God’s presence, but he that glorieth, must glory in “ the Lord (*c*);” that “ he differed nothing from o- “ thers,” — nor any one from another, but as “ grace “ made the difference (*d*);” that as to himself, he “ was “ less than the least of all saints (*e*); not worthy to be “ called an apostle, because he had persecuted the “ church of God (*f*);” that what he had received was freely given him of God; that “ God who was rich in “ mercy, for the great love wherewith he had loved “ men, when he was dead in sins, had quickened him,” even as others, “ in Christ Jesus (*g*).” He was taught, (and this judgment ever remained with him), to “ count every thing but loss, for the righteousness of “ God by Jesus Christ (*h*);” so that his great labour \*, or ambition, whether present in the body or absent, now or hereafter, was, so, “ to be accepted “ of God (*i*);” “ keeping his body in subjection, lest, “ while he preached this gospel to others, he himself “ might become a cast-away (*k*);” and this at last was his joy and his triumph, that he had “ fought this “ good fight, and kept this faith (*l*).” — Thus in his conversion was self destroyed in its foundations; he was instructed in, and only indebted to divine mercy, effectuating salvation for him; he was thoroughly penetrated with the glorious truth concerning it; he saw

(a) 2 Cor. xii. 11.

(b) Rom. vii. 18.

(c) 1 Cor. i. 29. 31.

(d) 1 Cor. iv. 7.

(e) Eph. iii. 8.

(f) 1 Cor. xv. 9. 10.

(g) Eph. ii. 4. 5.

(h) Philip. iii. 8.

(i) 2 Cor. v. 9.

(k) 1 Cor. ix. 27.

(l) 2 Tim. iv. 7.

\* Φιλοτιμοῦμεθα.

this to be the spring of redemption to all men ; he was captivated with the beauty of this grace, and smitten with the like love to the souls of others, as had overcome and saved himself. The tinct was deep in his soul, nor did the strong impression ever fade.

As is a fountain, so will its streams flow and rise. The salvation of all men, as the doctrine of the gospel shews us, is equally from grace. The corn that insensibly groweth up to maturity, in a lengthened season, is not less the effect of all-sufficiency, than what, by a divine command, might be found springing up and ripened in a moment. Yet, by such sudden appearance, would we be more deeply impressed with the sense of the power of God producing it, in the one case than in the other. Men are apt in this imperfect state to be so affected ; and God for their good, when necessary, is pleased sometimes so to accommodate his dispensations to them. The surprising circumstances therefore of this apostle's conversion, naturally made the most lasting impressions of the abundant grace displayed in his redemption, upon his own heart, as well as upon those of others (*a*) ; made him ever exalt it, and the more earnestly, as a matter of gratitude, as well as love, seek, that many others should be under obligations to the same grace with himself, that his redeeming Lord, in all, might be glorified (*b*). From his own heart, so replete with an admiration and sense of mercy, the stream run all his life long full and strong towards others, both that they might also be saved, and that his Lord might be magnified.

2. Along with his own salvation so disposing his mind towards others, he received a commission to preach this redemption to them. His being so remarkably called by grace, and having Christ revealed in him, made him feel the weight of God's declared intention by him, immediately, and with power. " I con-

(*a*) Gal. i. 23. 24.

(*b*) Gal. i. 24.

" ferred



“ferred not,” says he, “with flesh and blood (a);”  
 “but straightway preached Christ in the syna-  
 “gogues (b).” It is not necessary at present, we should  
 enter minutely into the questions, concerning the time  
 he was constituted an apostle; nor when he received  
 first the revelation about preaching to the Gentiles  
 the unsearchable riches of Christ. We know, that, when  
 in a trance at Jerusalem, his Lord said to him, “De-  
 “part; for I will send thee far hence to the Gen-  
 “tiles (c).” The boundless love of God and Christ  
 was then manifested to him; the scriptures respecting  
 the calling of the Gentiles, were opened; then the pride  
 of his being an Hebrew of the Hebrews was no more;  
 any barbarian was welcome to his loving embrace, as  
 the most genuine son of Abraham according to the  
 flesh; his remaining bonds which held the Christians  
 of the circumcision, were loosed, and his heart was  
 enlarged to the extended offices of this divine love to  
 souls, which ever after he laboured and rejoiced to  
 fulfil. How sweetly and willingly he felt the force of  
 these obligations, we learn from himself in the most en-  
 dearing language. “I am a debtor both to the  
 “Greeks and Barbarians, the wise and the unwise: so  
 “that, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the  
 “gospel” (through whatever dangers) “to you who  
 “are at Rome also (d).” Not only was he pleased with  
 these obligations, but he triumphs as honoured with the  
 highest privilege, by being laid under them. “Where-  
 “of I was made a minister, according to the gift of the  
 “grace of God given unto me, by the effectual work-  
 “ing of his power. Unto me, who am less than the  
 “least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should  
 “preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of  
 “Christ (e).” “Neither did he count his life itself

(a) Gal. i. 16.

(b) Acts ix. 20.

(c) Acts xxii. 21.

(d) Rom. i. 14. 15.

(e) Eph. iii. 7. 8.



“ dear to him, if he might fulfil the ministry he had  
“ received of the Lord Jesus (*a*).”

In order to fulfil it, after these foundations were laid, in his personal obligations to grace, in his soul's being thoroughly cast into the mould of that love which saved him, as well as in his high designation to this service by the will of God, and appointment of Jesus Christ; he was fully instructed in this doctrine which is able to save souls. This he had, not by the teaching of any man, but by the revelation of Christ himself (*b*), as well by visions on earth, as being caught up into the third heavens (*c*), to hear more than he could impart in human language to men (*d*); and also by the constant abiding of the Holy Ghost within him, filling him with all wisdom, knowledge, and spiritual understanding. — To declare this to all nations, without difference, he was endued with the gift of tongues above all others (*e*). — To prove its being from God, he had the power of working all sort of miracles, even to the raising from the dead; nay of conferring those powers upon others, by the laying his hands upon them (*f*). And though, through the abundance of revelations, his outward man was rendered weak and infirm, yet was the grace of God more abundantly with him, shewing with the greater evidence, whence it was that his gospel became wisdom and power unto the salvation of many (*g*).

Having said these things concerning the preparation of this apostle for going forth into the world, lying in wickedness and idolatry, to declare redemption; let us next illustrate, how, when so prepared, he actually exerted the spirit of love which was in him, for bringing men into the obedience of faith, that they, according to its doctrine, might be saved.

(*a*) Acts xx. 24.

(*b*) Gal. i. 12.

(*c*) Acts xxii. 17.

(*d*) 2 Cor. xii. 4.

(*e*) 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

(*f*) Acts xix. 6.

(*g*) 2 Cor. xii. 9.

And he did this by a faithful and full declaration of that truth which alone is able to save souls, — doing this by an exertion of all his powers; he shewed it by his joys when successful, — by his sorrows when he prevailed not; — by his disinterestedness and self-denial in promoting this gospel to the salvation of men; — by his great and unceasing labours; — by continued personal sufferings; — and when in old age and in certain views of dissolution, by engaging those he loved most, in labours and hardship, in order to advance the same cause.

1. We say the apostle “sought the profit of many, “that they might be saved,” by a clear and full manifestation of that truth he had received from Jesus Christ, for the salvation of men. That name, besides which there is no other given under heaven, whereby men can be saved (*a*), and that whole doctrine of redemption which accompanieth it from above, was made known to him, for the end of publishing it to the world for salvation; and as “a scribe well instructed to bring “out of his treasure things new and old (*b*),” he failed not to declare them. Knowing that “in the unity of “this faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, “the body of Christ was to be edified, and thereby “Christ brought to his perfect stature (*c*),” in preaching that faith he was unalterably steadfast. The trust was high; and he could say, “But as we were allowed “of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we “speak, not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our “hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering “words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God “is witness. Nor of men sought we glory (*d*).” “And “seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mer-

(*a*) Acts iv. 12.

(*b*) Matth. xiii. 52.

(*c*) Eph. iv. 13.

(*d*) 1 Thess. ii. 4. 5. 6.



“cy, we faint not; renouncing the hidden things of  
 “dishonesty, nor handling the word of God deceitful-  
 “ly; but by manifestation of the truth, we commend  
 “ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of  
 “God: so that if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them  
 “that are lost (a).” While he declared the testimony of  
 God, he would mingle with it no man’s wisdom to please  
 the Greeks; he was determined to know no doctrine for  
 salvation, but Christ and him crucified (b); nor used he  
 any guile or enticing words to persuade men to believe  
 it, but alone for that end trusted in the demonstration  
 of the Spirit and the power (c). To please the Jews, he  
 would not conceal nor keep back ought which belonged  
 to it. In this Peter might fail; and even “Barnabas,  
 “that good man, might be carried away with the dis-  
 “simulation (d):” but when this apostle saw that  
 they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of  
 the gospel, he would not give place by subjection, no  
 not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might con-  
 tinue with the church (e). According to the “wisdom,”  
 that is, the full extent of revelation, given unto him,  
 did he unfeignedly deliver it to men, that they might  
 be saved. “I kept back,” saith he, “nothing that  
 “was profitable; and takes all to record, that he was  
 “pure from the blood of all men, for he had not shun-  
 “ned to declare unto them the whole counsel of  
 “God (f).”

2. The apostle discovered his fervent love to save  
 souls, by exerting his whole talents and powers in pur-  
 suit of this good object. We have formerly taken no-  
 tice of his strong natural parts, and his learned educa-  
 tion; nor missed he any occasion to make excellent use  
 of these, to promote the darling end of seeking the profit

(a) 2 Cor. iv. 1. 2. 3.

(b) 1 Cor. ii. 2.

(c) Ib. ii. 4. 5.

(d) Gal. ii. 13.

(e) Gal. ii. 5. 13. 14.

(f) Acts xx. 20. 26.



of many to save them. — His profiting in the Jewish religion above his equals, he often availed himself of to establish the faith of Christ amongst them : “ And Paul, “ as his manner was, went in unto the Jews, and three “ sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the scriptures ; opening and alleging, that Christ must needs “ have suffered, and risen again from the dead ; and “ that this Jesus whom I preach unto you, is Christ. “ And some of them believed (*a*),” &c. His Greek learning, in like manner he turned to advantage, in his disputes with philosophers, reasoning with them upon their own principles, and citing their own poets, to the great purpose of laying foundations for leading them to the faith of Christ the Redeemer (*b*). The polite address whereof he was master, he employed, to gain a more favourable hearing to the truth as it is in Jesus, before kings and governors ; because, according to the will of God, he “ would have these and all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth (*c*).” His natural ardour he wholly engaged in this cause, and thereby was produced an elevation and vehemence becoming the heavenly things he declared to men, his anxiety for their deliverance from the wrath to come, and their becoming partakers with him of a heavenly inheritance. In the same spirit, he was ready to condescend, in his love to souls, to every prejudice or weakness in men, as far as conscience could possibly allow him, in the gentle and long-suffering temper of his great master, who “ put not new wine into old bottles, lest “ they should perish (*d*).” “ We were gentle among “ you,” (saith he to the Thessalonians), “ even as a nurse “ cherisheth her children. Ye are are witnesses, and “ God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably “ we behaved ourselves among you that believe : As you

(*a*) Acts xvii. 2. 3. 4.(*b*) Ib. xvii. 22. 23.(*c*) 1 Tim. ii. 4.(*d*) Matth. ix. 17.

“ know, how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged  
 “ every one of you, as a father does his children (a).”—  
 With tenderness and prudence, consistent with integrity,  
 yet animated with zeal, he adapted himself to every  
 denomination of men, that he might gain of them  
 all to salvation: “ For though I be free from all men,  
 “ yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might  
 “ gain the more. Unto the Jews I became as a Jew,  
 “ that I might gain the Jews; — to them that are  
 “ without law, I became as without law, that I might  
 “ gain them. — To the weak became I as weak, that I  
 “ might gain the weak. I am made all things to all  
 “ men, that I might by all means save some. And this I  
 “ do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker  
 “ thereof with you (b).” He would not by any means  
 frustrate the grace of God to any, and therefore employed  
 his whole powers, opportunities, and advantages, to bring  
 men without exception to salvation by it.

3. Success in this great point, was the joy of his  
 heart. It were to transcribe almost his whole writings,  
 to shew how in exhortations, commands, thanksgivings,  
 and prayers, this was the longing and gladness of his  
 soul (c). To be the instrument himself of converting  
 men to Christ, or to hear of it by others, alway revived  
 him (d); therefore, “ if Christ was preached,”  
 (though even in spite to himself, which yet God  
 might make his wisdom and power to save), “ he did  
 “ and would rejoice (e).” To observe men when converted,  
 “ standing fast in the Lord,” was his life (f).  
 If they “ kept the ordinances (g),” the appointed

(a) 1 Theff. ii. 7. 10. 11.

(b) 1 Cor. ix. 19.—23.

(c) Rom. i. 11.; & xv. 13.

Gal. i. 23. & vi. 1.; Col. ii.

12.; Eph. i. 17.; Philip. i.

4. 8.; & ii. 26.; 2 Cor. i. 14.

(d) Rom. i. 8.; Col. ii. 1.;  
 & ii. 5.

(e) Phil. i. 18.

(f) 1 Theff. iii. 8.

(g) 1 Cor. xi. 2.



means of salvation, it excited his praise. And the advancement of Christians in particular graces, was the gladness of his heart. Good tidings of the faith and charity of the Thessalonians comforted him in all his afflictions (*a*). The obedience of the Romans by word and deed (*b*), the patience of the Philippians and Thessalonians (*c*), the liberality of the churches of Macedonia and Corinth (*d*), as flowing from the faith and love of the gospel, and the evidences of the power of its grace in them, were the rejoicing of his soul. If any had sinned, even to a degree not named among the Gentiles, to such an one, and to all who had soothed him in his wickedness, upon hearing of their unfeigned repentance, how exceedingly is he comforted, how impatient to confirm his love to them all (*e*)! His anxiety for the comfort and prosperity of all Christians, is evident by the care of all the churches coming daily upon him, even of those he was not personally acquainted with, but whose conversion he heard of: "For I would that ye knew what  
 " great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the  
 " flesh: that their hearts might be comforted (*f*)," &c. In short, the whole bent and longing of his soul was, that men might be saved: "God is my record," saith he, "how greatly I long after you all in the  
 " bowels of Jesus Christ. For what is our hope, or  
 " joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming? For  
 " ye are our glory and joy (*g*)."

4. But jealousy in the fear of, and grief at the disappointment, are equally the symptoms and concomitants of genuine love, as the joy of possession. Therefore,

(*a*) 1 Theff. iii. 6.

(*b*) Ro. n. xv. 18.

(*c*) Philip. i. 30.; 1 Theff. iii. 7.

(*d*) 2 Cor. viii. & ix.

(*e*) Ib. vii. 4. 7. 16.

(*f*) Col. ii. 1. 2.

(*g*) 1 Theff. ii. 19. 20.



in the apostle's love for the salvation of men, his anxiety lest any stumbling-block should be put in their way to it, is great. What holy indignation did he express against Elymas, for attempting to turn but one from the faith? "O full of all subtilty, and all mischief," said he, "thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind (*a*)," &c. How earnest with Timothy to shun profane and vain babblings, and errors concerning the truth; which, he observed, did eat as doth a canker, and overthrew the faith of some (*b*)? How uneasy at the seeds of division in the church of Corinth; how jealous, lest through subtilty they should be corrupted (*c*)? Who was weak, and he was not weak? who was offended and ready to fall, and he burned not with zeal for his recovery (*d*)? When Peter himself, by his conduct, endangered some, he withstood him to the face (*e*); and so severe was he upon Hymeneus and Alexander, seducing Christians to their errors, that he delivered them over to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme (*f*). In the same spirit of love, he was in great heaviness, and continual sorrow in his heart for his brethrens sake the Israelites, in their obstinately rejecting the gospel of salvation (*g*). When the Galatians are in danger of losing or denying the truth in the capital article of it, justification alone by Jesus Christ, he grieves, exhortates, and warns (*h*). Are the Corinthians lifted up in sin by glorying in a great transgressor, he sinks under the load, his flesh hath no rest; and because, after all, he suspected some had not thoroughly

(*a*) Acts xiii. 10.

(*b*) 2 Tim. ii. 16. 17.

(*c*) 2 Cor. xi. 2. 3.

(*d*) Ib. xi. 29.

(*e*) Gal. ii. 11.

(*f*) 1 Tim. i. 20.

(*g*) Rom. ix. 2.

(*h*) Gal. ii. 21.; Ib. iii. init.

repented;

repented ; in his coming to them again, “ he was afraid  
“ his God would humble him (a).”

5. He further demonstrates “ his not seeking his  
“ own profit, but the profit of many, that they might  
“ be saved,” by carrying his “ disinterestedness and  
“ self-denial” far, while he proceeded in this benevo-  
lent design in the world.

None could more firmly establish the principle of the  
labourer’s being worthy of his hire ; that therefore,  
they who laboured in the best service on earth, at the  
altar of God, by that altar should live (b). Yet as his  
grief was, that many “ made gain of godliness (c),” so  
he not only sought not gain in this service, but declined  
to receive even necessary subsistence from many church-  
es (d). Having, according to the custom of his coun-  
try and age, in his youth been bred to a handicraft  
employment, he could say, “ I have coveted no man’s  
“ silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, yourselves know,  
“ that these hands” (hands often and earnestly stretch-  
ed out in beseeching them to be saved) “ have mini-  
“ stered to my necessities, and to them that were with  
“ me (e).” — “ Or I only and Barnabas, have not we  
“ power to forbear working ? Who goeth a warfare any  
“ time at his own charges ? who planteth a vineyard,  
“ and eateth not of the fruit thereof ? or who feedeth  
“ a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock ? Say  
“ I these things as a man ? or saith not the law the  
“ same also ? — Nevertheless, we have not used this  
“ power ; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder  
“ the gospel of Christ. — What is my reward then ?  
“ Verily, that when I preach the gospel, I may make  
“ the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not  
“ my power in the gospel ; for it were better for me to

(a) 2 Cor. xii. 21.

(b) 1 Cor. ix. 13.

(c) 1 Tim. vi. 5.

(d) 1 Thess. iii. 8.

(e) Acts xx. 31. 32.



“ die, than that any man should make my glorying  
 “ void (a).” “ Have I committed an offence in aba-  
 “ sing myself, that you should be exalted, because I  
 “ have preached to you the gospel of God freely?  
 “ Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.  
 “ But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off oc-  
 “ casion from them which desire occasion (b).” There-  
 fore he was (and considering his great bodily weakness  
 and infirmity, it was no wonder he should be (c), “ in  
 “ weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in  
 “ hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and na-  
 “ kedness (d).” Nor was it as to outward things only,  
 that the apostle, in love of mens salvation, was disin-  
 terested and self-denied; he was no less so, to internal  
 pleasure. Who had more opportunities of gratifying  
 the refined, but guilty satisfaction of superiority over  
 the minds of others, in all the delicacies of power? But,  
 saith he, “ not that we have dominion over your faith,  
 “ but are helpers of your joy (e).” When he heard  
 of some approaches this way, by “ calling him master  
 “ upon earth,” in holy indignation he exclaims, “ Ye  
 “ are yet carnal, and walk as men. For while one saith,  
 “ I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye  
 “ not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos,  
 “ but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord  
 “ gave to every man (f)?” Nay so low doth he lay  
 himself in self-denying love for the salvation of men,  
 that he could say, “ I will very gladly spend, and be  
 “ spent for you, though the more abundantly I love  
 “ you, the less I be loved (g).”

6 But this full exertion of power and talents, this joy  
 or grief, this disinterestedness and self-denial for the sal-  
 vation of men, was not the first start of affection upon

(a) 1 Cor. ix. 6. 7. 12. 15. 18.

(b) 2 Cor. xi. 7. 11.

(c) 1 Cor. iii. 3.; Gal. iv. 13.;  
 2 Cor. x. 10.

(d) 2 Cor. xi. 27.

(e) Ib. i. 24.

(f) 1 Cor. iii. 3.

(g) 2 Cor. xii. 15.



his obligations to the love and mercy of God for his own salvation; it flowed from a living and abiding principle, and was the labour of his whole life, even to old age.

This spirit of divine love, in obedience to his redeeming Lord, he discovered indeed, from the first moment of his conversion. “Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and turn to God (a).” More than twenty years after that event, it is written of him; “After these things were ended, Paul purposed through the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome (b).” — And again afterwards, when at Corinth, “So that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ; and when I have performed this, and have sealed to them (at Jerusalem) this fruit, I will come by you into Spain (c).” But his unwearied journeying is best seen by attending to his history as recorded by his companion Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles; or in the treatises of those learned men, who have from year to year carefully traced his steps, and with exactness shewed them to the world \*. Nor could any thing tire or discourage him in these labours of love. How striking in this view, is his conduct at Lystra! There was he stoned and left for dead: yet the very next day he departed for Derbe, and having preached the gospel there, he returned again to Lystra, the place of his danger, to Iconium, and Antioch, (whence they came who persuaded those at Lystra to

(a) Acts xxvi. 19. 20. (b) Ib. xix. 21. (c) Rom. xv. 19. 28.

\* See Pearson in annal. Paulinis; Usserii annal.; Langius de vita Pauli; and Benson on the Acts.

stone him), to confirm the disciples, and to exhort them to continue in the faith; and that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God (*a*). How he laboured, when settled for a considerable time in any place, we learn from his farewell-address to the elders of the church at Ephesus. “Ye know, from  
 “ the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner  
 “ I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord  
 “ with all humility of mind, and with many tears and  
 “ temptations which befel me; how I kept back nothing  
 “ that was profitable, but have shewed you, and have  
 “ taught you publicly, and from house to house; remembering that for the space of three years, I ceased  
 “ not to warn every one, night and day, with tears (*b*).” And thus also to the Thessalonians, “Being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also  
 “ our own souls, because ye were dear to us. For ye  
 “ remember, brethren, our labour and travel: for labouring night and day, because we would not be  
 “ chargeable to any of you, we preached unto you the  
 “ gospel of God (*c*).”

Outward toil naturally wears out our feeble frame; but when to it is added anxiety of mind, then is it particularly wasting. Different passages already cited, (and many other which might be adduced), shew this to have been the lot of this apostle: “Besides those  
 “ things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches (*d*);” care about them, in painful sympathy in all their dangers, temptations, and tribulations, and solicitude for their prosperity in every respect. This anxiety indeed was so extensive and diffused, as to descend to every particular Christian he knew or was connected with.

(*a*) Acts xiv. 20. 21. 19.

(*b*) Ib. xx. 18. &c.

(*c*) 1 Thess. ii. 8.

(*d*) 2 Cor. xi. 28.



In critical situations of his beloved Timothy; in an unexpected absence of Titus bringing tidings to him concerning the church of Corinth, he had no rest in his spirit, but went from Troas to Macedonia to meet him; being "troubled on every side, as without were fightings, and within were fears (*a*)."

We observe the concern he could take, even for Onesimus a converted slave, that Philemon his master might receive him kindly. But when Epaphroditus, the messenger to him from Philippi, was dangerously sick, it affected him so deeply, as occasioned his saying, upon his recovery, that "God had mercy upon him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow (*b*)."

Is it any wonder then, when called to it, though (as his modesty expressed it) he was the least of the apostles, that he should say, through the grace given him, he laboured more abundantly than them all (*c*)? How he supported, and what his views were in this life of (otherwise) insupportable labour, we learn from himself, declaring, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily (*d*)."

7. But neither was this great and unceasing labour all the evidence the apostle gave of his love for the salvation of souls. To this he added the enduring of sufferings, "being always ready to have Christ magnified in his body, whether it should be by life or by death (*e*)."

From the first moment his conversion was known, to his martyrdom, in what place, and unto what extent did not he endure hardship? Loved he peace, did he

(*a*) 2 Cor. ii. 12. & vii. 5.

(*b*) Philip. ii. 27.

(*c*) 1 Cor. xv. 9. 10.

(*d*) Col. i. 28. 29.

(*e*) Philip. i. 20.



seek it always? with the cruel reproach of being “a pestilent fellow, a seditious man (*a*), a turner of the world upside down,” was he arraigned before tribunals. Did he passionately love his country and his brethren? by them in particular must he bear to be abhorred, and persecuted with violent and unrelenting malice. Had he a taste for eloquence? the scorn of “What will this babbler say? (*b*),” must he endure from the great judges of it at Athens. Loved he the truth of God above all things? from a governor upon his judgment-seat, must he be upbraided with madness, when most elevated in declaring it (*c*). Was he possessed of a superiority of soul to most men? to his lot the wretched indignity must fall, of fighting, in the theatre at Ephesus, with wild beasts (*d*). But to go through particulars were endless.

His two epistles to the church at Corinth, were written in the 22d and 23d years of his Christianity, and there are different places in both, which describe his life till that period, as the most afflicted that possibly could be. Take the following passages as a few samples. The contrast to the plentiful situation of many at Corinth is strong: “Now,” saith he, “ye are full, now ye are rich. — For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death. For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, — we are weak, — we are despised. Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless: being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto

(*a*) Acts xxiv. 5.

(*b*) Ib. xvii. 18.

(*c*) Acts xxvi. 24.

(*d*) 1 Cor. xv. 32.

" this day (a)." Again, " We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake (b)." " But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels (c)." Nor in the remainder of his days, even to old age, did the storm abate, as we may afterwards notice. And what can be beyond these things in the spirit of love for souls, or in suffering on that account \*?

But

(a) 1 Cor. iv. 8. &c.

(c) 2 Cor. vi. 4. &c. See also chap. xi. 23.—33.

(b) 2 Cor. iv. 8. &c.

\* Attacks have been made upon Christianity from every quarter unbelievers have been able to devise. Of late they have said, that the true way of examining religion, is as other branches of philosophy have successfully been tried, by facts and experiments; and surely Christians will not decline that method of inquiry. Upon this apostle's suffering so much persecution from all sorts of men on account of the gospel, one fact then offers itself to consideration, which Christians



But whence all this fortitude? Many in the world, it may be said, have undergone great hardships from evil as well as good principles; from pride, from obstinacy of temper, or from delusion and enthusiasm. The fact is

would wish to see explained otherwise, than, by what lies deep in their religion, the corruption of human nature by sin, and the alienation which is thereby in the heart of man to the life of God.

Hatred, we have seen, is originally unnatural to a creature so formed for love as man; and that species of it shewn in persecution for religion, and particularly on account of such a dispensation of love and grace as the Christian, is otherwise very unaccountable. If envies, and strifes, and wrath, are explained, as proceeding from our narrow views of things, and interfering interests with regard to the means of our happiness in this world, and therefore to be imputed only to the "imperfection" of our present nature and state; how shall this phenomenon be explained, that against a doctrine which enlarges our views by the faith of another world, and which, in its hopes, is far enough from interfering with our possessions here, such general spite and violence should have been manifested amongst men? — The fact cannot be disputed; our scriptures give the most copious accounts of this from one age to another; and with this, other histories of the world perfectly coincide. It is in vain to allege, that the mischiefs which the corrupters of Christianity have occasioned, under its name, to the world in latter ages, in order to carry on their unhallowed designs, are the occasion of this. To cut off all cavil on this account, let it be asked, what mischief had Abel done to Cain, or Jeremiah to the Jews, or Jesus Christ to the people he appeared among? And as the case of this apostle hath led to this reflection, what harm had he devised or done to any one person, or any people under the sun? who yet was certainly reproached, hated, and hurt by all sorts of men. What was discovered dangerous in him by all his accusers? What hath to this day perpired from all he taught, or wrote, or did after he became a Christian, that was the least injurious to provoke to such treatment? Or what have many others, who, in former or latter ages, have feared the Lord, been guilty of? that while living in the more retired virtues of religion, devotion, or meekness, and being every way harmless, have yet met with the contempt of "poor creatures," from men; and when exercising love's public zeal for the salvation of men, have been considered as troublesome men, and treated accordingly, still verifying that maxim of this apostle, "That all who would live godly in this world, must suffer persecution."

What other account can be given of this matter, than what that loving man John affords, "Wherefore slew Cain his brother? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." An account, which, upon a thorough and impartial examination, will only be found fully to correspond

is acknowledged. But so was not this apostle moved to his fortitude, and to his patience.

It was not pride producing obstinacy in him, that made him stand the many shocks to which he was exposed. No man had more sensibility than he; nor could any, upon just occasions, in order to escape indignity and pain, with more Roman spirit, assert and claim his privileges as a Roman (*a*). Nay, however by principle subject to governors and men in authority; yet could he appeal from their sentences to higher tribunals, that he might avoid dangers; as, on other occasions, he also with great address exercised his prudence, to be delivered from persecuting men (*b*).

As folly or an obstinate temper, then, were not the springs of his patience in enduring his various and vast load of suffering, so neither was it delusion or enthusiasm. He was ever ready to give the reasons of that hope which was in him, for which he was judged (*c*), and so often bound in chains. Nor could any thing please him better than to have these reasons examined and brought into fair trial. With the Jews in their synagogues, he shewed out of their law and prophets, that Jesus was the Christ; before Jew and Gentile he wrought miracles, and gave powers to others to do so likewise, to confirm the doctrine he taught. Were not all tongues spoken by him, the sick healed, death inflicted, and death delivered from, and all at once? In these could he, and all, be deluded? Was this respond with the appearances of hatred which have ever been in this evil world, in proportion as men have shewn themselves attached to God, and his truth for salvation.

A high degree of depravity this! perfectly agreeing with the whole scriptural account of our deep corruption, by apostasy from God; displaying the highest necessity of his grace to save us; and justly exciting to thankfulness for it, as revealed in the gospel; and at the same time affording no small presumption for the reality and truth of the whole doctrine.

(*a*) Acts xvi. 3 . & xxii.

(*b*) Acts xxv. 11.

(*c*) Ib. xxvi. 6.



thusiasm? By the arts and powers of oratory, men may lead others to the persuasion of very unaccountable opinions, and many may be deluded. But was Paul, and that prudent man Sergius Paulus, and Elymas, a cunning forcerer too, all deluded, when Elymas was struck blind (*a*)? or Publius, and all Melita, and Paul too, deluded, when Publius's father, and all the sick in the island, upon Paul's praying, were healed (*b*)? or the whole assembly at Troas, when Eutychus was restored to life (*c*)? Was it all enthusiasm, when upon twelve men at once, by laying on his hands, the Holy Ghost came, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied (*d*)? These things are impossible; the facts must be disproved, else the naming of delusion or enthusiasm to Paul performing them, is the last insult that can be offered to the understanding of man, and to all the evidence by which he ever was determined to give credit.

Nor was this apostle afraid, but readily entered into dispute with philosophers in their highest schools, about that true God whom he served, and that Jesus Christ whom he preached, as the Redeemer and last judge of men, in opposition to all their idols, their superstition and false science (*e*).

Before governors he could so closely reason of the weighty matters of his religion, for which he was in bonds, as to make them tremble from their tribunals (*f*); and so incomparably make an apology for his faith before a king of the best understanding, (which therefore made him happy), and expert in these things, as "almost persuaded him to become a Christian (*g*)."

But when neither justice nor privilege

(*a*) Acts xiii. 11.

(*b*) Ib. xxviii. 8, 9.

(*c*) Ib. xx. 12.

(*d*) Ib. xix. 6.

(*e*) Acts xvii. 18, 19.

(*f*) Ib. xxiv. 25.

(*g*) Ib. xxvi. 28.

could protect, nor reason nor scriptures prevail, then he knew how to suffer, and with magnanimity to bear. For if magnanimity consists in a certain greatness of soul, supported by truth; and, though without outward aid in the midst of enemies, in enduring with patience many difficulties while struggling for it, then, undoubtedly, was this apostle a true hero.

Who ever had more enemies, or enemies more violent and powerful than he? or who fewer friends in his extremities? During his first confinement at Rome, he wanted to send a faithful minister of Christ to his beloved Philippians to act in his room; and is obliged to say, "I trust in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy shortly unto you; — for I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's (a)." And when a second and greater danger in the same place, under cruel Nero, which indeed proved fatal, beset him; he wrote to the same faithful Timothy, under the weight of years and chains: "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. For Demas" (whom a little before, in his epistle to Philemon he had called his fellow-helper) "hath forsaken me, having loved" (the ease of) "this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia; Titus unto Dalmatia. — At my first answer no man stood with me, but all" (as all had done his Lord in his afflictions (b)) "forsook me: I pray," saith he, "it may not be laid to their charge (c)."

But the want of true friends was not his only affliction in that view; to this there was joined the bitter addition of many false ones. "In perils," saith he, "among false brethren (d)." This he had for his love to

(a) Philip. ii. 19. 20.

(b) Matth. xxvi. 56.

(c) 2 Tim. iv. 9. 10. 16.

(d) 2 Cor. xi. 26.



the free salvation of us Gentiles. Bigotted Jews came privily into his assemblies, to spy out this liberty from Moses; and then raised storms against him amongst their brethren, from whom he suffered so many things on this account (a).

He was “ a young man when converted (b),” and from that moment his fight of afflictions began. When far on in his warfare, he protested to the Corinthians, “ that he died daily (c).” When his course was near finished, he wrote to Philemon, “ being such a one “ as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner of Jesus “ Christ.” And when his departure was at hand, when just ready, at the pleasure of the wickedest and most cruel of all men, to be offered up, his description of himself and his whole life was, “ I have fought the “ good fight.”

It will throw a just and good light, not only upon the patience, but willingness of Paul, in all his sufferings, to bear them, to remember what the Lord said to Ananias at his conversion, not only that he was “ a “ chosen vessel to me, to bear my name among the “ Gentiles, &c. but, I will shew him how great things “ he must suffer for my name’s sake (d).” This we know was accordingly shewed him by his Lord, and this is the true key to open up his wonderful spirit in all that befel him. Thereby to fulfil the will of his redeeming Lord, to glorify him and his Father in the world, and to be the happy instrument of saving souls, was his joy. And so he himself fully explains the matter to the Thessalonians. “ Wherefore, when we could no long- “ er forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens “ alone: and sent Timothy — to establish you, and to “ comfort you concerning your faith; that no man

(a) Gal. ii. 4.

(b) Acts viii.

(c) 1 Cor. xv. 31.

(d) Acts ix. 15. 16.

“ should

“ should be moved by these afflictions : for yourselves  
 “ know that we are appointed thereunto. For veri-  
 “ ly, when we were with you, we told you before, that  
 “ we should suffer tribulation ; even as it came to pass,  
 “ and ye know (a).” So also he told the Colossians,  
 that “ he rejoiced in his sufferings for them, and filled  
 “ up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ  
 “ in his flesh, for his body’s sake, which was the  
 “ church (b).” The sufferings of Christ are the foun-  
 dation of all our hope for salvation ; but the suffer-  
 ings of his apostles, and particularly of Paul, were  
 made useful to awaken the world to attend to this sal-  
 vation, to confirm real Christians in the faith of it, and  
 otherwise to promote the exercise of grace in them :  
 “ But I would,” says he, “ ye should understand, bre-  
 “ thren, that the things which happened unto me, have  
 “ fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel :  
 “ so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the pa-  
 “ lace, and in all other places ; and many of the bre-  
 “ thren in the Lord waxing confident by my bonds,  
 “ are much more bold to speak the word without  
 “ fear (c).” “ Wherein,” says he further, “ I suffer  
 “ trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds ; but the  
 “ word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all  
 “ things for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain  
 “ the salvation which is in Jesus Christ, with eternal  
 “ glory. It is a faithful saying. For if we be dead with  
 “ him, we shall also live with him : if we suffer, we  
 “ shall also reign with him : if we deny him, he will  
 “ also deny us (d).”

Behold then the principles upon which the apostle  
 acted in his sufferings, and the spirit by which he bore  
 up under them. In all this was he an enthusiast, or  
 did he act wisely ? and did he reason well in saying,

(a) 1 Theff. iii. 1. &c.

(b) 2 Cor. i. 24.

(c) Philip. i. 12. 13. 14.

(d) 2 Tim. ii. 9. 10. 11. 12.



under all his trials, "Our light affliction, which is but  
 " for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding  
 " and eternal weight of glory (*a*)?"

For his dear Master's honour, for his own, and for others salvation, he was content to be thought any thing the world pleased, and to endure all they could lay upon him. "For we commend not ourselves again unto  
 " you [Corinthians], but give you occasion to glory on  
 " our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer  
 " them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.  
 " For whether we be besides ourselves," (so was he reproached), "or whether we be sober, it is for your  
 " cause (*b*)."

On these accounts it was, that, after former dangers, we find him willing to enter the theatre at Ephesus, amidst an enraged multitude, to make a defence of the truth of his Lord, by which souls can only be saved (*c*). Therefore also, when the Spirit testified in every city, that bonds and afflictions awaited him, he could say, "None of these things move me (*d*)."

And when, in repeated prophecy, it was declared, what, in his going to Jerusalem, should befall him, and was besought not to go there by his friends with tears; these, but not the dangers, moved him: "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep,  
 " and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be  
 " bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the  
 " name of the Lord Jesus (*e*)."

When the threatened afflictions came, instead of shrinking, his great concern was, to engage others to "pray that God would open  
 " to him a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of  
 " Christ, for which he was also in bonds; that he  
 " might make it manifest, as he ought to speak (*f*):"  
 as his only fear was, lest any, by his tribulations,

(*a*) 2 Cor. iv. 17.

(*b*) 2 Cor. v. 12. 13.

(*c*) Acts xix. 30.

(*d*) Acts xx. 24.

(*e*) Acts xxi. 12. 13.

(*f*) Col. iv. 3. 4.

might be offended, and moved away from the hope of the gospel: "Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at  
 " my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For  
 " this cause I bow my knees unto the God and Father  
 " of our Lord Jesus Christ (a)." And how he was comforted, when, by these, Christians were not stumbled, we learn: "For this cause, when I could no  
 " longer forbear, I sent to know [the steadfastness of]  
 " your faith, lest by some means the tempter have  
 " tempted you, and our labour be in vain. But now  
 " when Timothy—brought us good tidings of your  
 " faith and charity,—we were comforted over you in  
 " all our affliction and distress by your faith: for now  
 " we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord (b)."

But courage and patience in afflictions were not all that was manifested by this benevolent man for the sake of the gospel, and of souls. To these he added glorying and rejoicing. In his bodily weakness and infirmities, received by the abundance of revelations, as the apostle of the Gentiles, in order to preach the gospel fully unto them, which brought upon him so much contempt from men, he gloried (c):" because the grace of God was upon that account more abundantly bestowed upon him, and the power of God to salvation was, in these circumstances, more demonstrated and made conspicuous, while under them many were by his means converted.

Thus also, after many stripes for the gospel's sake, he was found at midnight in prison, with Silas, making joyful praise to his Lord (d). When he was reproached for the name of Christ, he was happy; for then the Spirit of God and of glory the more rested upon him. "When  
 " the sufferings of Christ abounded in him, his consolation also abounded by Christ. Whether we  
 " be afflicted," saith he, "it is for your consolation and

(a) Eph. iii. 13. 14.

(b) 1 Thess. iii. 5. &amp;c.

(c) 2 Cor. xii. 9. 10.

(d) Acts xvi. 25.



“salvation :—or whether we be comforted, it is for “the same cause (a).” So that indeed it became part of his doctrine, to “glory in tribulation (b).”

To what height did not this wonderful man carry his benevolence for the salvation and spiritual comfort of others? We shall not make it our present business, to settle the precise meaning of the remarkable expression, of “wishing himself accursed from Christ, for his brethren’s sake the Jews (c).” We only observe, that as, in just criticism, it is capable of a fair meaning, without admitting what, if literally taken as it stands in our version, it would seem to import; so the whole passage, beyond dispute, breathes all the anxiety of good-will for the salvation of his brethren according to the flesh; as do also many other places in his writings: “If by any means I may provoke to emulation them “which are my flesh, and might save some of them.—“What shall the receiving of them be, but life from “the dead (d)?” “My heart’s desire and prayer to “God for Israel is, that they might be saved (e).”

Not indeed to them only, but to all the church of God, did he carry his benevolence, as far as a man can possibly be supposed to go.

He was much acquainted with the love of God which passeth knowledge, and with the grace of his Lord which to him had been so exceeding rich: he had, moreover, been in the third heavens, had seen the honours, heard the language and songs, and tasted the joys of the redeemed there; as by many other ways he was assured of being made an eternal sharer in them. The ardent desire of his soul, therefore, was, to be where he thus knew it was “best.” But, in his great love to the salvation and

(a) 2 Cor. i. 5. 6.

(b) Rom. v. 3.

(c) Rom. ix. 3.

(d) Rom. xi. 12.—15.

(e) Rom. x. 1.

comfort of men upon earth, he could so far (and far it was to such a man) deny himself, as not only to be in a strait, but actually to prefer a longer abode here, in the midst of all his outward sorrows, under the sure prospect of finishing them in all the ignominy and anguish of a public death, as a malefactor, instead of being carried immediately to the possession of all his wishes with his dear and glorified Redeemer. "According," saith he, "to my earnest expectation, and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall chuse I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh, is more needful for you. [Benevolent indeed!] And having this confidence [persuasion], I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith (a)." Was ever, amongst men, such free, full, and unreserved love to others, as this apostle shews for the salvation of men, of all men?

Lastly, we finish this representation of the apostle's benevolence, in "seeking the profit of many, that they might be saved," by remembering the complacency he had in the labours and sufferings of those he loved most, to further the same blessed purpose. And the argument lies thus. One may be liberal in resigning his own ease and profit; and when he does so for advancing the good of those he loves, he is generous in friendship: but when he would sacrifice the peace and advantage of those who are his best loved friends, for the sake of many he has no particular connection with; himself retaining a knowing and loving character; as it justly argues his

(a) Philip. i. 20.—25.

full



full persuasion of the certainty of the system he pursues, so doth it shew an enlargement and elevation of soul in love, raising the human heart to heaven itself. A heart so inspired had this apostle. We thus illustrate it.

Toil and sufferings are the last things a friend can wish to them he loves; a real friend hath often suffered, nay exposed himself to death, in sympathy, or in order to deliver those he hath affected tenderly. And who so affectionate or frequent in such self-denials for those he particularly loved, as Paul? But however fervent in private kindness, he could not thereby cramp his general and universal love for the salvation of men. He honoured "his own" private interests, by sacrificing them to the advantage of others; and he would also honour the present quiet of his best loved friends, by devoting it, to promote a more general good. Indeed in proportion as he found men of this public and generous spirit, so they became endeared to him. Thus he thanked God, who had put the same earnest care into Titus for the Corinthians, as himself was filled with; concerning whom, after labouring and travelling amongst them, he exulting said, "Did Titus make a gain of you? " walked we not in the same spirit, and in the same " steps (a)?" When sufferings fell to the lot of such as he loved, while striving for the faith of the gospel; after thanksgivings that they had not been offended by the cross, he could say, as to his dear Philippians, "And " in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which to " them is an evident token of perdition, but to you " of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is " given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on " him, but also to suffer for his sake; having the same " conflict which ye saw in me, and now [in bonds at " Rome] hear to be in me (b)."

(a) 2 Cor. xii. 13.

(b) Philip. i. 28. 29. 30.

But if the apostle doted in love upon one man on earth, more than another, it was upon Timothy; "his own, his dearly beloved son (*a*);" not only because he had begotten him to Christ, as he had done many, by the power of the same saving truth, but because of that remarkable and singular resemblance to Jesus Christ and to himself, in benevolent self-denied love, which he found in him for the salvation of souls, of many souls. So he testifies of him to the Philippians: "I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that as a son with a father, he hath served with me in the gospel (*b*)."

Yet to this tenderly beloved youth, he sent his second epistle (his last writing upon earth), when a second time in chains at Rome for the gospel, and that after he had once answered to his accusation before the devouring lion Nero (*c*); when, from what he observed there, or otherwise by the Spirit knew, he was in certain and immediate prospect of a violent death from that tyrant. Now let us reflect upon this situation of things.

Paul bowed down with age, and chains, and the labours and sorrows of many more than thirty years, in the service of the gospel and of souls, finds his departure from life at hand (*d*). He writes to his darling friend and son; and in what terms? (*e*) With regard to himself, declaring the most firm faith in that gospel he had preached, and suffered so much upon account of, and for which he was now ready to be offered up; not ashamed, but in transport at the immediate prospect of eternal honour and felicity thereby. — And with regard to his beloved friend, amidst many endearing ex-

(*a*) 1 Tim. i. 2.; 2 Tim. i. 2.  
& ii. 5.

(*b*) Philip. ii. 20, 21, 22.

(*c*) 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.

(*d*) 2 Tim. iv. 6.

(*e*) 2 Tim. i. 9.—12.



pressions of the tenderest affection, we find him in the most solemn manner charging him to spend his life and strength in that service, which upon himself had only brought poverty, reproach, afflictions, and death; to be instant in season and out of season preaching this doctrine; as a man of God, to be perfect in his work; as a minister of Christ, to use the scriptures by every method proper for the salvation of souls, according to them: never to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of himself as his prisoner: to shrink at no danger, however alarming, but in his own person to be “partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God;” and, in all self-denial, to “endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (a).”

This, therefore, we consider as the last evidence that could be given of love to souls and their salvation. At once it shews the apostle’s own full persuasion of the truth of Christianity, and of its power to save eternally; and his most earnest desire that that blessed effect should be produced by it to many: that having himself suffered the loss of all things, and to the last counted them but dung, for Christ as the Redeemer of men, he with his dying breath should press so vehemently the person who was dearest to him on earth, after he should be gone, to engage himself entirely in the same cause; to expose himself to every danger and hardship in an eager pursuit of the same great end, the “seeking the profit of many, that thereby they might be saved \*.”

Behold

(a) 2 Tim. iii. 14.; iv. 1.—5.; i. 7. 8.; ii. 3. 4.; iii. 10. 11. 12.

\* Christianity is of that nature, that if one of its many evidences is found good, it must be true; and whatever objections are made against other parts of it, they fall to the ground. Thus, not only, if the capital article of the resurrection of Christ is fairly proved, all the cavils made against its miracles, prophecies, &c. cease; but there are many other particulars that belong to it, and several of them that have not been very minutely considered by its defenders, which, if found true, must have the same effect. Not a few such might easily

ly

Behold then a fair pattern of benevolence, of Christian benevolence, supported by the truest magnanimity! the aim the best, the noblest, and the most extensive;

ly be named. No inconsiderable instance of this kind was some time ago produced concerning Judas Iscariot. In particular, the argument for the truth of our religion from the conversion and life of Paul, hath of late, to excellent purpose, been insisted upon by Lord Lyttelton, and by Dr Benson, in his dissertation upon that subject, adjoined to his commentary upon the epistle to Philemon; where the alternative is put to the Deists, and they called upon to take either side of it, and fairly debate, whether the apostle was an enthusiast or impostor.

They may chuse which side they please; Christians are ready for them. If he was an enthusiast, he was surely the most egregious and deliberate fool that ever either lived or died under that character; who after such a life of misery as he had passed through, which he was just about finishing in the way most disagreeable to human nature that can be, could so warmly advise his young and most beloved friend to embrace the course, which by experience he knew, and foretold would produce so unhappy a lot to him in the world. Or he must, if an impostor, have been the wickedest man that ever breathed. The depravity of man is not the doctrine which infidels are fondest of; but however, if Paul was an impostor, he must have been extremely far gone in it. Nay all mankind may be challenged to produce his equal in villany, upon the supposition he acted a part, in his professed belief of Christianity, to betray, without any possible temptation of advantage to himself in his present situation, his best beloved and loving friend, into such certain misery in this life, as the following his counsels must certainly lead him into.

But corrupted and misjudging as men are, who upon sober consideration can believe the apostle Paul was either the one or the other of these? The appeal is made to the common sense and candour of mankind, if either of these suppositions is possible. Let his writings be read; the more they are examined, the better: and who in doing so will not discern, on the one hand, a degree of understanding, acuteness, and judgment, that fall to the share of few men upon earth, and which render it quite impossible, that, as a fool, or a weak man, he should be imposed upon in the facts he affirms were the reasons of his being a Christian? Set aside his teaching by the Spirit and his visions at present; could such a man as he be imposed upon in the matter of his own power of working miracles, or of conveying that power to others? In these was he so weak, as to be deluded? or by whom was he thus deceived? and for what ends? The human mind at once rejects such absurdities.

But if his knowledge, sagacity, and penetration are inconsistent with the weakness of his being imposed upon in these things—no less so is that candour, that benevolence, disinterestedness, that turn for friendship, that superiority of soul to all craft and guile,



five; the means, to outward appearance, impotent and unavailing; the supports from without few, often none; the adversaries many, powerful, violent, and unceasing. We have heard of heroism amongst men; we have heard it extolled: and there are, no doubt, in the human heart, original seeds of true greatness; but how, by corruption, debased! The fruits, what have they generally been? Think of the living, or search into the records of the dead. What will you find? The worst actions of subtilty, fraud, and cruelty, in wide wastes of earth and men: destruction, not salvation, hath in this world being dignified with the name of greatness and heroism. And before Christianity, what was most faultless in this way was confined to time, and the happiness of an earthly life, as well as to particular places, families, or nations. It is Christianity only that hath thrown down all distinctions amongst men; that hath opened new, great, boundless, and eternal scenes for the exercise of its divine benevolence; that hath again, after many a dreadful envy and strife, made all men brethren; that hath extended their common interests to an eternal state, and there connected them in love with other worlds, and all their glorious inhabitants (*a*). It is Christianity which,

which so remarkably distinguish all his actions and all his writings, inconsistent with his being a deceitful man. Let the books be produced, ancient or modern, where these great qualities so uniformly and strikingly shine forth; proceeding from a man too, than whom none was ever in more temptations to bring forth his secret, if he had one to impart, or to betray. The sagacity and truth of this apostle seem equally strong and unimpeachable. And if neither can be overthrown, Christianity is true. Christ is in heaven, and men may be saved by him. It were much to be wished sceptical and unbelieving men, for their own sakes, would fully consider so fair and decisive an argument for the truth of Christianity. The apostle's writing this second epistle to Timothy in his situation, if Christianity be not true, most certainly makes him not an ordinary, but so weak or wicked a man, as to have few, if any parallels upon earth: A proposition, either branch of which we suppose will be found very hard of digestion, to a mind where are any remains of candour.

(*a*) Heb. xii. 22.—24.

by

by its almighty spirit, hath taught and supported its believers with true magnanimity, as well as made them often successful in the pursuits of its loving designs. With it indeed is no outward pomp to dazzle the eyes, or pervert the judgment of the beholders; but poverty often, reproach, and other tribulations, so apt to produce neglect and contempt from blinded and ill-judging men. Yet true wisdom will be justified of her children: the spiritually wise will discern through the cloud, where real excellence lies; and will desire a share of the same spirit. In this view, the apostle having exhorted the Corinthians to lay aside a private spirit of selfishness, and to seek one another's wealth, desires them to turn their eyes to himself, who, as they could remember and observe, lived, acted, and suffered in that spirit of divine love he so anxiously wished them to be filled with; while he pleased not himself, but desired to "please men in all things, not seeking his own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved."

2. Though the consciousness the apostle had with respect to the purity of his intentions, the nobleness of his aim, and the comfortable effects of his conduct upon himself, even in the midst of labour and suffering, made him set his example before the Corinthians, to seek one another's profit for salvation; yet doth he not rest the matter here. Intent upon their hearkening to this divine and important exhortation, he tells them, that all the benevolence to others found with him was copied from the infinitely more perfect love of Jesus Christ to men: "As I am of Christ;" which therefore above all he leads them to consider, in order to prevail with them in important argument.

This was a great topic of the apostle's (as well it might) when he would persuade Christians to mutual kindness.



So wrote he to the Romans : “ We then that are strong,  
 “ ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to  
 “ please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neigh-  
 “ bour for his good to edification ; even as Christ plea-  
 “ sed not himself (a).” So addresseth he the Philip-  
 pians : “ Look not every man on his own things, but  
 “ every man also on the things of others. Let this  
 “ mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus (b).”  
 So also spake Christ himself : “ A new command-  
 “ ment I give unto you, That ye love one another ;  
 “ that as I have loved you, ye also should love one an-  
 “ other (c).”

And it is no wonder, when the apostle wanted to urge this great duty, this old and new commandment of love (d), that he should chuse this example of Christ, as the great and finishing motive to enforce it upon men ; as his love for the welfare of others is in itself of such infinite excellence, manifested too for their salvation, and so exerted, as to become fit, in many respects, to be a pattern for them in their love to their brethren. His introducing the love of Christ as an example of love after his own, was like leading men from a single stream to its true and unfathomable fountain.

In the apostle we see all the love to others wherewith the heart of man can be filled : but in Jesus Christ we find the height and depth, the breadth and length of it which fills the heart of God. He is in this “ the  
 “ express image of the divine glory,” even all the fulness of God. In the one, we see a man lifted up to heaven in love ; in the other, we see God descending to earth to shew how it is in heaven. Christians are said in their regeneration to be “ taught of God to love  
 “ one another (e) :” which is not only, that by his in-

(a) Rom. xv. 1.—4.

(b) Philip. ii. 4. 5.

(c) John xv. 12. 17. ; & xiii. 34.

(d) 1 John ii. 7.

(e) 1 Thess. iv. 9.

struction they are directed, by his authority commanded, or by his grace powerfully influenced to it; but allured also thereto, as it is held forth to them in actual life by his own Son, to a pitch of fervour and extent in beauty and joy, which otherwise could never have entered into their minds to have conceived. And shall it not be decisive with all our hearts, and make us willing to be captivated and transformed into the same blessed image?

From the beginning God appeared to be love. In the whole frame of his creation other attributes were conspicuous, but love shone supreme and over all, in the condescensions of causing every good and perfect gift to descend upon objects infinitely beneath, and no way necessary to his own glory or blessedness.

But the condescensions of love to objects beneath God, and shewing bounty to them, were the heights of divine love then known: nor could created thoughts, by any investigation, have carried the kindness of the love of God farther than in that train.

That creatures who had been partakers of the love and bounty of God, but who had by transgression made themselves the just objects of his indignation, both upon account of his pure and spotless nature, and the righteous threatenings of his holy and good law given unto them; that these should ever have become the objects of his tenderest love, is a species of kindness, which (however familiar to us, since the divine revelation of it) could have entered into no thoughts but God's own.

The world, since God's first gracious communing with man after his transgression, never was wholly without the intimation of this mercy; and no wonder the knowledge in some degree should be preserved, wherever the foot of man hath trod, as it hath been, both by tradition, and the symbol of permitted worship by sacrifice. And as, on this account, it is no small presumption



tion in unbelievers, after man thus formerly was instructed, and now by more exprefs revelation taught of the grace of God to sinners, to affirm, that the transgressing creature could have discovered mercy in the offended Deity to him; so hath it been no inconsiderable error, in some late defenders of Christianity, to have admitted this. It is the more wonderful they should have done so, that the revelation they professed to believe and defend, so expressly declares the contrary, by asserting every where, that from God's own grace and wisdom alone, both the love, and the discovery of it, flows. From whence otherwise should such knowledge have come to man? Not from his own heart, where the constant action of conscience, its highest power, in condemning upon transgression, forbids the hope; not from the dispensation of the law he was originally under, where every disobedience is threatened with the divine displeasure; nor, as God's humbling commentary upon it, from the outward aspect of things in our world, where vexation and disappointment prevail, death at last concluding the vain scene to all without exception. It is God alone who, by his own revelation of mercy, sheds abroad cheerful light over all our gloom, and raiseth man to hope. It is not only true, that man could have made no discovery of this mercy to the transgressor, but we also find, after the discovery and the sure foundations of it were laid in the death and resurrection of our Lord, that it is expressly said, the highest spirits above were instructed by the after events themselves, who were to be the objects of it, in the calling of the Gentiles to this grace. So certain is this proposition, that God's thoughts and ways are so much his own, and so much above all in heaven and earth, that, until he is pleased to reveal them, they cannot be penetrated into by any creature: "That I should preach  
 " among the Gentiles," saith Paul, " the unfearchable  
 " riches

“ riches of Christ; and to make all men see, what is  
 “ the fellowship of the mystery which from the begin-  
 “ ning of the world hath been HID in God, who created  
 “ all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now  
 “ unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places,  
 “ might be known by the church the manifold wisdom  
 “ of God, according to the eternal purpose which he  
 “ purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord (*a*):” As indeed  
 the whole of the mercy of salvation, either to Jew or  
 Gentile, is elsewhere expressly ascribed to himself:  
 “ Not the wisdom of this world, that comes to nought:  
 “ but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, e-  
 “ ven the HIDDEN wisdom which God ordained before  
 “ the world unto our glory: which none of the princes  
 “ of this world (Gentile or Jew) knew. — But God  
 “ hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit (*b*).”

This then is love, not only in the first way of conde-  
 scension, but as God hath now discovered it, in self-de-  
 nial for the salvation of many men. So hath God mani-  
 fested what never could have been found out by the  
 creature, and so hath he commended his love, above  
 all that formerly in it was ground for admiration and  
 praise. In making known, in this way, his kindness,  
 he restrained his righteousness from smiting the trans-  
 gressor himself with deserved vengeance; nay more,  
 for ungodly men with-held not, but gave his Son to  
 be a propitiation for them; nor spared him, though  
 infinitely and only beloved, from the bitterness of  
 every death, nay not from the hiding of his own  
 face, and the enduring all his wrath against transgres-  
 sion. In love, the just suffered for the unjust, to  
 bring them to God. Is it any wonder, this should be  
 called the mystery of God, and of his love? a goodness  
 “ which eye had not seen, nor ear heard, and what had

(*a*) Eph. iii. 8. &c.

(*b*) 1 Cor. ii. 7.



“ not entered into the heart of man to conceive (a),” though, when made known, most to be admired, and God the author to be adored eternally upon account of it?

The sought-for objects of this love are the lowest of the reasonable creation; the most ignorant and insensible to all the things of God, and of their own deep concerns with him; least of all thinking of such mercy; the greatest and most aggravated transgressors, as unable to deliver themselves as unworthy to be saved by such kindness. All nations of men, without exception, lying under gross darkness, idolatries, and sins, are called to be partakers of it, and all its fruits. Nay, of such boundless comprehension is it, that after a thousand neglects and indignities when revealed, upon returning it promiseth forgiveness: it is long-suffering and salvation, in every respect, to the uttermost. Such are the heights, the depths, and unsearchable riches of this self-denying love to many men, seeking their salvation.

But this very love of the Father for the salvation of many men, is the love of the Son; he is “ the Son of “ the Father in this love (b).” When the veil of his humiliation is seen through, a glory is beheld, even “ the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of “ grace and truth (c).”

At present, we can by no means enter upon a description of the spirit of the love of Christ, or into a particular detail (even as we poorly might) of the many instances of it, while, in his self-denials, “ he sought “ our profit, that we might be saved.” These ought to be the study of our nights and days; with us should they be, when we lie down, and when we rise up, that thereby we may be more and more excited to cleave unto him, with purpose of heart, in every view, for our

(a) 1 Cor. ii. 9.

(b) 2 John 3.

(c) John i. 14.

salvation; and that the same spirit of love dwelling in us as did in him, may become a living law within us, to stir us up, not to seek our own only, but every man his neighbour's wealth, especially that they may be saved. For this end we ought often to think, how by day he spoke his gracious words of salvation, and by night watched unto prayer for us; how he had patience, and how he forgave; how he continued to go about doing good, while our evil brethren allowed him life in our world; and how at last, after every contradiction of sinners against himself, and the salvation he brought us, he shewed his greatest love, in not withholding his precious life, but willingly submitting to its being taken away, under the heaviest accusations of blasphemy, and being an enemy to his beloved Father's worship and glory, and that too under all the ignominy and pain the holy law directed against such heaven-daring crimes; that we the really guilty might escape our well-deserved shame and wrath, and be possessed of pardon and life eternal.

If then we were led to admire the disinterestedness and self-denial, the zeal, courage, patience, and steadfastness unto death, of the love of the apostle, imitating the benevolence of Christ to others; what shall we say of the divine original itself, from which he copied, and to which he would lead the Corinthians and us for the perfect pattern of love? Soon indeed may we discern the infinite superiority of the master, to him who was taught by him, however successfully, in this divine temper.

Paul's love had no such height to descend from, nor such fulness to be emptied of, to embrace its objects: they were his brethren. He had no such law to obey, nor such circumstances in death to endure as Christ. Nor, on the other hand, had Jesus such favours to be grateful for, to cause him stoop to mortification, nor such infirmities to be humbled under, nor such deserved wrath



to be thankful for the escape from, in the service of his deliverer, nor such an unmerited heaven to struggle for, while he felt the necessity of a command to preach the everlasting gospel for salvation, by a word to him, if he did it not. The self-denials of our Lord's love for souls are justly described, when it is said, "That though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich (a)."

Yet Paul came nighest him of all men in seeking the salvation of many, that they might be saved; and, in order thereto, in desiring to have a "fellowship with him in his sufferings, and a conformity with him in his death (b)." But the difference still between them is as infinite is to finite, in all the condescensions, the tenderness, the endurings, the patience, and the issues of their several loves to men.

From being in the form of God, to the becoming a person, and assuming a character of no reputation (c), was the astonishing self-denial of Christ's love to save us. From being Lord and Lawgiver in heaven, receiving praises from the thousands there, the holy One in the midst of them, filling all things, giving life and blessing to all, and causing all things to consist; to his being made under such a law as the cross, holding conversation with sinners, and hated intercourse with wicked spirits in his temptation; to his being smitten, spit upon, and every way abused, forsaken by friends, not having a hole to lay his head, numbered amongst transgressors, and, after every indignity and possible step of humiliation, to his yielding life itself, and giving up the ghost, by consent of heaven, and earth, and hell, at once, for men: these are strains of benevolence and good-will to others for their salvation, never before con-

(a) 2 Cor. viii. 9.

(b) Phil. iii. 10.

(c) Philip. ii. 7.

ceived or heard of; nay more, when now again exalted to glory and joy inexpressible, he still deigns, in the midst of all, to be touched with his people's infirmities, in all their afflictions to be afflicted; sending his Holy Spirit into their hearts, numbering the hairs of their head, caring for all, even the least of them, overruling all things for their good, and every way prepareth them, as vessels of mercy, for glory. What can we say unto such love, but that it is the love of God? The friendships on earth, the love of Paul, the love of angels, can have no place in comparison here: if they are allowed to be distant imitations, to be shadows to this infinite kindness, they are highly honoured.

For if the lowness of the object shews the height of love, as the greatness of it displays the magnificence of power; if unworthiness by sin declares the freedom and disinterestedness of the divine lover in his kindness; if exalting to high and eternal honours and joys discovers the riches of the bounty; if zeal to the end notwithstanding the greatest provocations from the loved object; and not being discouraged under the most astonishing personal indignities, until all the blessed purposes of kindness are accomplished, make the praises of love perfect; then is the love of Christ, in seeking not his own, but our profit to salvation, absolutely complete. He hath withheld nothing from us which Divinity can bestow, nor can any thing be added to his grace\*.

And

\* It is delightful to a serious and thinking Christian, to find, that let his religion be considered in what view one pleaseth, there is always evidence for its truth; like a substance of perfect form, let it be thrown which way you will, it will ever turn up right; as from other views, so thus, for example, from this short representation of the principles and conduct of Jesus Christ in redeeming us, we are led to observe, that the very idea of this plan proves its divinity. Men of true knowledge and taste in any art or science, know the hand of a



And are these things so indeed ? Is it a fact that the Divine Being is of this nature, the God of this love ; and hath the Son of this God of love been in our world

master, in any work belonging to it ; they at once perceive a consistency, a perfection, a superiority of design, and an ease in execution, which stand with them, instead of many proofs, with regard to its author.

It is thus, spiritual men discern a plan in Christianity, as taught and perfected by Jesus Christ, in its internal frame, such as is worthy of God, and which must, and would only come from him. Its grand intention is evidently to display the purity, the righteousness, and the love of the most high God, to an infinite degree ; in doing so, connecting happiness inseparably with holiness, misery with sin. In these, as well as in the whole manner of producing the discoveries, they observe an unity of intention, and consistency carried through all. Along with this they take notice, that a just proportion is observed in all its parts ; of offence with threatening, of obedience with promise. And again, in that reconciliation, which is the soul and centre of the whole from the beginning, they see the first declared indignation against sin, highly kept up, and its most dreadful malignity more displayed than ever ; while the reward of spotless self-denied obedience, in the personal honour and joy bestowed upon the Redeemer, shews love to holiness to a supreme degree. These high proportions are still preserved in the winding all up in a final judgment, where an adequate retribution is to be settled, in an enduring happiness or misery to the different characters of those, who either submitted to the holiness, righteousness, and mercy of the plan, or to such as, with aggravated guilt, rejected it. A connection also they mark in the whole from age to age, from dispensation to dispensation, evidently relating to the fulfilment at last of the great design ; not only a connection indeed, but a nice dependence of one part upon another. Take away its law, or its threatening, no propitiation due ; take away the propitiation, no spirit (its proper purchase) to renew from so deep a death, no heaven to bestow justly for reward. Again, remove the law, no ground of conviction to produce repentance. Take away the grace and mercy, then no inducement nor encouragement to it. Accompanying all, a wisdom and power proportioned to the grand effects is discerned ; thereby the most prudent counsels of adversaries opposing these designs, are always brought to nought ; and the means, often outwardly weak, disproportioned, nay seemingly contradictory, are, on its side, again over ruled, to produce unerringly its intentions of private salvation or universal propagation. As an underworking, for the use and suited to the low state of mankind, for whose unspeakable benefit this scheme in the first place is intended, prophecies and signs go before, and many proper and significant miracles attend its appearance. Outward circumstances too are found to create attention, in alarming judgments

world displaying it, and displaying it for our sakes? is the veil of his humiliation now removed, and, by his resurrection from the dead, is the whole glory unfolded?

judgments upon the opposers; and in no less striking deliverances and favour to the people of its faith, unless when their afflictions are necessary, and more valuable in the view of advancing it in the world, to be doubly recompensed hereafter, causing the sufferers themselves to triumph in them: all concluding with a solemnity perfectly agreeable to the greatness of the whole, in a resurrection of our bodies from the dead, in our becoming again complete, and a glorious issue in an awful judgment; in the whole of it standing connected with other worlds, and at last uniting all in a state of absolute perfection without spot, and without end. This illustration might be far extended.

Here then is certainly a plan great, new, extensive, surprising, consistent, connected, and proportioned; every circumstance well adjusted, and in exact dependence one upon another; conducted by wisdom, supported by power, and all corresponding with facts suited to the design intended; facts in themselves extraordinary, generally unexpected, not seldom deemed impossible, yet ever sure; and otherwise than to answer these purposes, inexplicable under the divine government; all issuing in a state of things like unto, and the proper perfection of what went before; in no part contradictory to itself, nor any one part or appearance of it to another; a foundation fit for the superstructure, a superstructure becoming the foundation.

Yet all this declared by men chosen by Jesus Christ to be the heralds of this doctrine, after, as he foretold to them, he should be crucified, and rise again; and who actually, after these events, performed this office. But how were they chosen by him? Not after long and previous acquaintance and trial, but seemingly in the most random way imaginable; some of them evidently at first sight; without any connection amongst themselves; nay often disagreeing and offended with one another; without education to any knowledge directly proper, or which could even be subservient to such a purpose; extremely slow to learn any new doctrine, and particularly averse to the spirit and peculiarities of this: so that when Christ was separated from them, they were certainly ignorant, and under deep prejudices against it, unfit to testify any thing that related to it, but the mere facts they had been witnesses to; but which could be of no use to explain the doctrine, until, by after instruction, they were taught to apply them to it.

The only one of learning or compass of previous knowledge amongst them, was the apostle Paul: but then it is remarkable the scheme was declared, the doctrine of it preached, and the effects with regard to the conversion of thousands to it produced, before he was called to be an apostle, as if so contrived, lest it ever should have been an objection, that such an one among the disciples was capable of devising it.

Besides,



ed? and are we called, not only to be saved by these compassions, but to resemble the divine lover in an honourable imitation, by our love to one another? the argument with man was always strong for love: being all of one blood, who ever should have hated his own flesh; who not nourish and cherish it? But since Christ hath become bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, and nourished and cherished a church amongst us, who

Besides, he had evidently a separate commission from the rest, seldom saw, or was employed with them.

Now, if Jesus Christ, by this seemingly random choice of disciples, had a discerning of spirits, and therefore missed not his aim; this ends the question in favour of Christianity, as it shews a supernatural direction, and that, as he said, he had communication with God whom he called his heavenly Father. But if this is denied, and the argument taken up on the opposite footing, it will be no less miraculous, that so many men, so chosen, should have devised and concurred in a scheme of truth, so sublime, so consistent, so adapted to other appearances in the world, and issuing so wonderfully to the honour of righteousness, and glory of those who love it. Differ in what they would, in this to the last they were uniform and undivided. We suppose no parallel in any respect can be produced to this in any scheme of doctrine or truth throughout all the ages of the world, affording no small confirmation to this "counsel and work's being from God," Acts v. 35.

What have mankind, after all their wisdom and philosophy, produced without revelation, that can stand any comparison with this scheme for the universe and for man, for time or eternity? The fancy of man hath never been idle in these matters. But can the ancient schools of wisdom be better described, than in the words of this apostle, the "oppositions of science?" And since Christianity hath appeared, and its unbelievers have had so many evident advantages from it, to enlighten and adjust their notions, what is the fruit? but measuring back our steps to darkness, to the most comfortless darkness, of "a world without particular providence governing it, "and of souls now existing, but without hope of their continuance "in an after state of being." Dark, dark indeed! one shudders at the dreary gloom. Of late, such schemes of the moral government of God, and the foundations of morality amongst men, apart from, and inconsistent with Christianity, have abounded; which in private whisper to the irreligious and unwary have appeared specious; but when brought to light, Christians need only stand by, and see their several authors and abettors overturn one another for their several inconsistencies and absurdities. For to them all may well be applied, what a fine poet hath sung concerning one particular branch of modern science.

Then

who would not be like him, and love men, that they may become partakers of his salvation? Who can reject the proposition, That it is good to be like God? "Against this there can be no law." Who is he that can produce a reason against it? Who would not be like God? like God in all the glories of his love, now displayed in perfect beauty, by Jesus Christ, in his self-denials for our salvation? If he hath so loved man, shall not men love one another? Was love so great a part of the divine image wherein at first we were framed? was this lost by transgression, when guilty selfishness, with its evil train, took place in our hearts? would the tender mercies of God, by his loving Son, now restore us to a blessed resemblance of him? are all men again set before us for the compassions, and new objects by grace raised up, for the complacencies and all the sympathies of our love? are the deepest concerns of others presented to us, for its full exertion? have we, in this blessed pursuit, opportunities of raising our souls to the highest elevation in kindness, as well as of dilating them to the widest dimensions, in desiring and rejoicing in the good of multitudes, who may be saved?

In Jesus Christ we have beheld this heavenly love perfected, as in doctrine and redemption, so in actual life as a pattern amongst us. And in the apostle of us

Then with imagin'd sovereignty,  
 Lord of his new hypothesis, he reigns:  
 He reigns! how long? till some usurper rise;  
 And he, too, mighty, thoughtful, mighty wise,  
 Studies new lines, and other circles feigns.  
 From this last toil, again, what knowledge flows?  
 Just perhaps as much as shows,  
 That all his predecessor's rules  
 Were empty cant, all jargon of the schools,  
 That he on 'other's ruin rears her throne,  
 And shows his friend's mistake, and thence confirms his own.

Blessed Christianity! which in its truth is like its author, the same to-day, yesterday, and forever; which stands immoveable amidst the shocks and attacks of many adversaries, appearing, by every new assault, more and more beautiful, and more and more impregnable.

Gentiles



Gentiles we have seen, how dutifully under the influence of many obligations, and how successfully, by divine grace, men may copy after it.

Not that we are called to the self-same actions and expressions of this benevolence to others, as Christ and his apostle ; but to the same spirit of love that reigned in them, to be shewn by such methods as God gives us opportunities and talents for, to advance the same blessed ends of good to others, which they pursued ; even as the apostle and Christ himself, at different times, performed distinct acts of the same love. God hath so knit his world, his church, and people together, that, by various kind offices, all may breathe the same spirit, and all promote the same excellent ends of mutual advantage and comfort. This passeth through all the works of God ; the chain and every link of it is wonderful ; and from height to depth, one part of it can be illustrated by another, in beautiful analogy. So writeth the apostle : “ For as the body is one, and hath  
 “ many members, and all the members of that one  
 “ body, being many, are one body ; so also is Christ.  
 “ For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body,  
 “ whether we be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free ; and  
 “ have been all made to drink into one Spirit (a) :” So that “ he that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit (b) ;” hath the same spirit of love every way to men, which was in him, for their good in all respects, and chiefly for their salvation. And it is in deep wisdom kindly contrived, that the lowest member of Christ can thus exercise his spirit and love. Who, for example, cannot breathe out his soul to God in affectionate concern for Zion’s prosperity, by prayer that her citizens may flourish like grass upon earth ? Who may not, in the sympathies of love, remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them ; and them which suffer adversity,

(a) 1 Cor. xii. 13. 14.

(b) 1 Cor. vi. 17.

as being yet in the body? Who may not in kindness exhort his neighbour, while it is called to-day? who not walk as the sons of God in the world, holding forth the word of life, and by many ways edify those around him? Nay, who may not give his mite, when that is called for, to sustain his Lord's poor in the world, or to send the knowledge of salvation to the ends of the earth? To these and other such evidences of divine love in the members of Christ, there is the highest encouragement in the gospel; as the reward of the labours of this love is hereafter to be, not according to the actual ability, but to the degree of kindness that excited the exertion, however small. And this naturally leads us,

IV. To apply this subject to the particular occasion of our being assembled here at this time; and therefore to recommend to your liberality, those objects which the worthy society for propagating Christian knowledge with us have taken under their care.

That in this method we may shew, we “seek not our own profit, but the profit of others, that they may be saved,” is obvious, as from other considerations, so from the words of the apostle, in Rom. xii. 6. where several offices of Christian love are reckoned up; and it is said, “Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, — or ministry;” — and it is added, ver. 8. “He that giveth, with simplicity; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness;” plainly declaring, that as some in the church might edify their brethren by the ministry, others by miraculous gifts, and all by some sympathising act of kindness, as the several members of our bodies in their different functions are serviceable to the whole; so upon those who are possessed of this world's goods, lieth an obligation, with singleness and cheerfulness of spirit, to give of their earthly

M

substance,



substance, when it is in providence called for, either to support the poor brethren of Christ, or otherwise to promote his interest in the world, and thereby show their love to him, and to his redeemed, as Christ himself manifested his love, when rich, in becoming poor for them ; or as the apostle did his, in labours and sufferings ; or while he employed his gift of many tongues, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ for salvation to the whole world.

And in entering upon the address we have now in charge to make you, for the good work of supporting, by part of your worldly substance, those objects we are to set before your Christian compassion, suffer me to call upon you to observe, that as those who stand ministering unto you in this place for salvation, have often cause to be astonished, while they reflect, that instead of being only employed as the mouth of men to God, humbly and ardently beseeching him to be reconciled to them ; they should be called to reverse the action, and in God's name, as if his were the loss to be delivered from, and theirs the favour to bestow, to intreat men, in the most anxious manner, for Christ's sake to be reconciled to him. The scene, if in the slightest manner adverted to, is confounding to the soul, in respect to the condescension of God, the grace of Christ, and the insensibility, the spiritual sleep, the death of men. The like surprise upon such an occasion as this may seize us, when we consider, that he "whose" (according to ver. 26. of our context) "is the earth, and the fulness thereof," and whose is all the substance we possess, should appear, in the matter of our bounty, changing place with us, and instead of sovereignly commanding to employ "his gold and his silver" as he pleaseth, should be found declaring, that what we give, is lent to him, which he will repay ; nay supplicating our mites to supply his needy ones, or to fulfil his other purposes on the earth,

as if he had no other way in the power of his all-sufficiency, to answer these ends; and under assurance too, that whatsoever is so done, he will reckon as done to himself, and now and hereafter, for our poor gifts, will bestow the joy and the reward; as if the thoughts, the means, and the works of the mercy had not been all his own, but ours.

But seeing such are the ways of God with men, we proceed to set before you two objects which our Christian society have under their care, and for which they by us solicit your beneficence.

1. The first is one long and well known in Scotland, and which we may call a child truly heavenly, formed in the minds of some Honourable and Christian men of this country and place, in the beginning of this century; in its early days nursed by a Queen\*; thereafter cherished and reared up to vigour by the royal and continued bounty of our good princes†; and now in hope of being ripened to farther maturity, under the kind influence of our present most gracious sovereign‡.

Considerable too hath been its nourishment, from the donations of private Christians at home, and in other countries, as well as by the charities collected through the church in general, and in these annual assemblies. We acknowledge the cry still is, "Give, give;" yet not as the daughters of the horse-leech, to devour and to destroy; but to have wherewithal to distribute, and to perform those sacrifices wherewith God is well pleased.

There are general good topics which may be used to promote all charities, and there are motives peculiar to each. That to which we now exhort you, "the support of the charity-schools in our highlands and islands,"

\* Q. Anne's first patent 1708.

† The royal bounty of 1000*l.* yearly.

‡ Clauses in favour of new erections, &c. in the act for annexing the forfeited estates, &c.



affordeth many. By different arguments this hath formerly been pressed with success ; these which at present occur to move your kindness, receive favourably as follows.

The objects are our own ; and our Lord himself, though he came in his love to save all nations, yet was not insensible to this consideration, when he said, “ I came to my own.”

Their language and country makes them in a great measure otherwise inaccessible to us or to our kindness, than by this method. Relief to their necessities in their best interests, instruction for life eternal, must thus be sent them ; but “ pure and undefiled religion is to visit the desolate.”

They are children, and children of parents who have neither access nor power but by these means to have them instructed, and in this view may be considered as fatherless. Now, children are a deep article in the covenant of our mercy. The Lord himself said with great tenderness, “ Suffer them to come to me.” And the “ Father of the fatherless” is one of the most endearing titles of the God of love whom we are called to resemble.

It is not merely a temporary benefit that is intended, but one to be transmitted to future ages, which greatly increaseth its importance. We attempt in this, according to the law to Israel, “ to make known the testimony of God to children, that the generation to come might know it, the children which should be born ; who should arise and declare it to their children ; that they also might set their hope in God (a).” This consideration causeth the profit of thousands, and thousands yet unborn, who shall reap this benefit, to rise in pleasant prospect before those who bestow it.

Nor let former discouragements slacken the hand in this good work. There hath always been such in

(a) Psal. lxxviii. 5. 6.

the best works in the world. When God's best seed itself is cast forth, with liberal hand, in the world's field; while some take good root, others fall on the way-side, and others are choked; yet is not the loss to the sower. God will give them their full wages: their own share of the harvest shall be plenteous.

When this society first took its rise, amongst others, one mighty discouragement lay in the way, making it doubtful if ever the desired ends could be fully attained. The earthly superiors of the objects of this charity held them in slavish dependence. Ancient and rivetted custom, made strong too by legal tenures, so rendered the masters "lords of their good and evil," as put it in their power at once to destroy (by carrying the poor vassals where they would) all the fruits of the kind pains taken upon them. Nor, on the parts even of the slaves themselves, was this evil lessened, by the unfortunate, but inveterate prejudices, they had in favour of this their miserable bondage: So very low can the boasted dignity of human nature be brought! But the love which formed the great and good design, was of that kind which "believeth all things, and hopeth all things;" and prevailed, under all these disadvantages, and in these precarious circumstances, "to cast the bread upon the waters, and not to withhold the hand," seeking their profit, that they might be saved. To such nobleness and generosity of spirit doth real Christianity raise men!

And indeed twice hath the unhappy influence we have mentioned carried some of those for whom these means of divine instruction were devised, to attempts, which, had they proved successful, must have ruined both themselves and us.

But of many, surely, who followed their masters in these evil enterprises, it might be said, as of those who were called to follow Absalom, in his rebellion against his



his father, " They went in their simplicity, and knew " not any thing." And as since that time we have seen that all of them, without exception, can be employed with honour and advantage in better service ; so, even in the midst of the danger from them, the argument was fair, " There is the greater reason for instructing " them." But now, in great happiness to them and us, their last attempt hath been over-ruled, to the knocking off their dreadful fetters to their ancient lords. They, with us, are now free. They hear the voice, and taste the sweets and advantages of liberty. Access to their instruction is, by many circumstances, rendered more easy ; and they who bestow this way, have surer prospects of the good ends intended, being answered amongst them.

Finally, with regard to this part of the subject, let it never be out of view, that the grand aim, in all this care, is, " that they should be saved." Other laudable designs have of late been forwarded for their outward benefit ; may they succeed \*, and, as is intended, prove subservient to promote their best interests : for Christians will ever say to one another, " We wish above " all things, that thou mayst prosper, — even as thy " soul prospereth (a)." Without this last indeed, in their eyes, who have themselves believed for life eternal, (though they are the last of mankind who can be divested of compassion of any sort, yet) the rest are scarcely worth a wish. With it, to every agreeable circumstance of other kinds of prosperity, their hearts beat warm.

And if, in our highlands and islands, the happy fruit of these instructions shall prove salvation, the Christian benefactors will be filled with true satisfaction ; when, in every and in the best sense, they are made to know, that " our wilderness and solitary places are become glad ; " that our deserts are rejoicing, and blossoming as the " rose ; that the eyes of the blind are there opened,

\* Second charter.

(a) 3 John 2.

“ the ears of the deaf unstopped, and the tongue of  
 “ the stammerer, and the dumb singing; when in our  
 “ wilderness waters are breaking out, and streams in  
 “ our desert; when no lion is found there, nor any ra-  
 “ venous beast, but the redeemed of the Lord walking  
 “ there (a).”

So much concerning the object of your liberality this day.

2. There is a second, not more interesting indeed; for, as hath been said, these are “ our own;” but, in another view, more important, as vastly more extended, we would next recommend to your kindness, and towards which this society at all times is ready to receive your beneficence, with thankfulness to God and you.

It hath been above observed, that selfishness ever narrows in its wayward course; but benevolence, ready for every good work, always seeks, and seldom but enjoys a larger sphere and compass, for its kind acts.

The “ good vine” (we have now spoke of) “ plant-  
 “ ed amongst ourselves, having taken deep root, and  
 “ filled our land, having covered our hills with her  
 “ shadow, hath also sent out her boughs into the sea,  
 “ and her branches to distant rivers (b).”

For after this good society, as was natural and just, had settled the means of divine instruction, in the remote parts of our own country, a voice was heard from afar, saying, “ Help us.” Nor was a deaf uncompassionate ear lent to the cry. This society were not to be instructed, that the Father of their Lord had declared as his decree, “ the Heathen should be given him for  
 “ his inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for  
 “ his possession (c);” nor that their Lord himself, in the days of his ministry upon earth, had also said in prophecy, that “ this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached

(a) Is. xxxv.

(c) Psal. ii. 8.

(b) Psal. lxxx. 10. 11.



“ in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then  
 “ shall the end come (a) :” and they were, by their own  
 obligations to mercy, debtors to seek the profit of many,  
 however in every sense afar off, that they might be saved.

Accordingly missionaries from this society have been  
 supported among the wildest Indians in America, and  
 though not always, (for reasons now in a good measure  
 removed), yet sometimes have laboured, with remark-  
 able success, as is to be learned from Mr Brainerd’s and  
 other journals.

This harvest is now become far more plenteous, and  
 more labourers are called for. The divine blessing upon  
 his Majesty’s arms, and the happy fruit, in the establish-  
 ment of peace, make us like men that dream, while  
 we think on the security of our colonies in America, the  
 rest of our churches there, and the vast extent of domi-  
 nion, both in respect of territory, and the multitude of  
 Heathen tribes, now acquired to us.

But shall national power and glory, and the increase  
 of perishing wealth, (so often destructive to its posses-  
 sors), be all the fruit? Forbid it Lord! Worldly and  
 political men may carry their views no farther; but  
 real Christians will be attentive to other objects upon  
 this great event. They will remember what God hath  
 spoken, in unfailing prophecy, concerning his Zion :  
 “ Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold : all these  
 “ gather themselves together, and come to thee : as I  
 “ live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with  
 “ them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on  
 “ thee as a bride doth (b).” And again, “ Sing, O bar-  
 “ ren, thou that didst not bear ; break forth into sing-  
 “ ing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with  
 “ child : for more are the children of the desolate, than  
 “ the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. En-  
 “ large the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth

(a) Matth. xxiv. 14.

(b) Is. xlix. 18.

“ the curtains of thy habitations : spare not, lengthen  
 “ thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt  
 “ break forth on the right hand, and on the left (a).”  
 As after the King of Zion (having ascended in triumph  
 over all his enemies) was reigning in all his glory, it  
 is declared, “ The kingdoms of this world are become  
 “ the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he  
 “ shall reign for ever and ever (b).”

At such a time as this, then, in comparing the words  
 and the ways of God together, Christians will be led to  
 deep thoughts of heart, about the accomplishment of the  
 counsels of the Lord which stand for ever; and perhaps,  
 upon this great event, will be led to remember his  
 works in the past generation. And was it for this, will  
 they say, that in hard times for conscience, last centu-  
 ry, so many, who feared the Lord greatly \*, left their  
 native country, and went voluntary exiles, through the  
 dangerous deep, to this distant wilderness; where the  
 hardships were so great, and so many fell under them;  
 where others, beyond strength, bore, and had patience,  
 and fainted not; but, in the midst of all personal discour-  
 age, with apostolic love and zeal † laboured a-  
 mongst the original natives, “ not seeking their own pro-

(a) If. liv. init.

(b) Rev. xi. 15.

\* It is remarkable, that in K. William and Q. Mary's charter to  
 New England, they expressly declare, that King Charles I. their  
 royal grandfather's intentions of giving his patent to the first settlers  
 was, “ that their good lives and orderly conversations may win the  
 Indians, natives of the country, to the knowledge and obedience of  
 the only and true God and Saviour of mankind, and the Christian  
 faith.” At once the most noble testimony for these good men from the  
 hands of their persecutors, and an indelible reproach upon that Pro-  
 testant government which permitted not such to have a quiet and  
 peaceable habitation in their own native land. How much happier  
 our times, when of this unnatural and antichristian crime of persecu-  
 tion, it may be said, that it is not so much as named amongst us, as  
 becometh men, and Christians, and Protestants, to the praise of our  
 good government, and its gentle administration. See Neal's hi-  
 story of New England, vol. 2. app. N<sup>o</sup> 2.

† Mess. Eliot, Mayhews, and others.



“fit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved?”

And do we indeed now discern the divine over-ruling of all this? and is this one of the many accomplishments, of what our Lord once said to over-curious Peter, “What I do, thou knowest not now, but shalt know “ hereafter (a)?” and as the explanation of that once dark dispensation, do we now see this field open and appear boundless, as the blessing upon that precious seed? and do not our hearts enlarge to it? Was it indeed for this that righteous men were brought from the east, in holy humble pilgrimage, with their families, their little ones, and their substance, as at the foot of God? that “then,” but more “now” nations should be given before them and their seed, by spiritual conquest? And do they now call to this society \*, and by them to us all, for help to carry them on? and shall that help not be given, liberally given?

With them are the instruments for this heavenly warfare, and you they solicit for succour to them; succour, not to enrich, but barely to support THEIR necessities, whom, from among them, God stirreth up to go amongst the Heathen, to bring them, not by our carnal, but his own spiritual weapons, unto the obedience of Christ; men who are contented to be poor, if they may make many rich; and to spend their own days and lives in labour, if they may lead others to everlasting rest.

And is not this a fair occasion for our allowing the doctrine of our text to have its full effect upon us; a happy opportunity for exerting our Christian benevolence in seeking the profit of many, that they may be saved, and thus become imitators of Jesus Christ, and of his and our apostle?

Here is ignorance. This cloud hath long sat deep

(a) John xiii 7.

\* See the American correspondence with the society, upon this head, in the late states of the society's affairs, at the end of their anniversary sermons.

and

and thick upon these Heathen; and long have they sat contented and unalarmed under it. Darknes, gross darkness covereth this people; and it is given to us, to cause "the day-spring from on high to visit them," and disperse their dreadful gloom; "to bring them to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin, and guide their feet to the ways of peace." With many advantages may we now say to them, "Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord hath arisen upon you."

And they are "many." The different denominations of men in our context, filled an apostle's soul enlarged in love, when he thought of saving many from amongst them all: and here, too, the many different tribes and denominations of men, which at present lie open to our spiritual instruction, may well suit our most boundless and Christian love to souls.

How many Indians, by possessing their country, and dwelling with them, we have access to, we cannot say, as we cannot tell from whence they are sprung\*. Here too

\* There have been many disquisitions, among learned men, concerning the peopling of America; as may be seen in Harris's voyages, Neal's history of New England, and other books where collections of these things are. As to South America, the presumptions are high, that the inhabitants have come from China, or other parts of Asia: as, upon the other hand, the proofs are no less strong, that the people of North America have come from Tartary. In this however is another no less difficult question involved, what people these originally have been? As the migration was not impossible, some have imagined they are the posterity of the ten tribes. Dr Fletcher, ambassador from Q. Elizabeth to Muscovy, has collected several curious circumstances to prove that the Tartars are descended from these tribes. See this treatise republished in Whiton's life, p. 576. And, notwithstanding all that Basnage or others have said to discredit this opinion, there are some things very unaccountable amongst these Tartars, if at no time they have had a connection with the Israelites. The notion of the Tartars being thus descended, is far from an inconsistency with the people of North America's being sprung from them too: on the contrary, it increaseth the presumption that it is so. Sir William Penn, in his letter of the present state of the lands of the English in America,



too are the despised negroes, who yet are men, and men who ought to be brought, by us, to him, in whom, it is promised, "that all nations of the earth  
" shall

in order to strengthen this opinion, among other things favouring it, says, that they reckon by moons, offer the first-fruits, mourn for their dead in respect to time, as do the Jews; and that the customs of their women are similar to theirs. But these things may be equally found among the most barbarous and ancient nations of the universe. See, for instance, Colben's account of the Cape of Good Hope. And in argument this hath quite another effect than to prove that such people are the descendents of the Jews, namely, to show unanswerably, that many, very many of the institutions of Moses, are the republication of the religious usages of Noah, and of such consequently as were by God appointed for mankind from the beginning, and after the fall; and the author knows he is well founded in asserting, that no man can be sensible how far this goes, until he hath very carefully compared the customs recorded in Job and the part of the Pentateuch which precedes the giving of the law, with the law of Moses itself; a view of things extremely favourable to revelation. There are some other articles indeed, in Sir William's letter, that have another aspect, and must have been peculiar to the Jews, such as the North Americans keeping a kind of feast of tabernacles, their having an altar raised upon twelve stones; but especially, if it shall be found true, what is of late reported by some missionaries, that, among some tribes, they kill a fawn once a-year, about the time of the Jewish pass-over, and allow not a bone to be broken; that they eat not of the fawn which shrank; and (the Cherokees) have cities called beloved, where upon no account they allow blood to be shed: I say, if these reports shall be found true, what conclusion can one draw, but that assuredly these people are of the Jews? In a late curious and learned treatise, it is shewn, that the weights, &c. of Cornwall were those used by the ancient Phœnicians †: and who, after that, can hesitate about the Phœnicians having of old corresponded, at least, with that part of Britain, because it is beyond all credibility, that otherwise two such distant countries should have hit upon the same standards of traffic? Or when the old Persian and Druid religions are compared, and such a resemblance found in their several superstitions; how can an opinion of their having the same original be avoided? But surely it is no less, nay more incredible, indeed wholly inexplicable, that the distinguishing rites of the Israelites, and which can only have meaning, by the circumstance of their settling in Canaan, that these should be thought upon, and adopted by a people now so barbarous, and naturally made so by their manner of life, and only kept up by long tradition among them. These people must have come from some of the first inhabited parts of the earth: and can any lay such a claim to them, as the Jews, if after inquiry what is above is found just, as well as other circumstances of language, &c. which, in a note like

† See Borlase's antiquities of Cornwall.

“ shall be blessed \*.” These indeed are not so much considered upon the footing of neighbours by us, as the

this, cannot be enlarged upon? If any thing like evidence were found for this, what additional zeal might justly fill our souls for the conversion of these tribes? and what arguments might fill the mouths of those who preach a Messiah to them? and upon the whole what effects this might have upon Christians in general in the world, who can say?

\* We enter not upon the general question, how far the making or purchasing of slaves is consistent with Christianity. We know it was one of its ancient fruits, to banish slavery, with other Heathen barbarities. Neither do we inquire into the good policy of setting no bounds to their numbers in our colonies. But we may justly assert, that it is against the whole genius and spirit of Christianity, to use slaves inhumanely. Enough of sin, surely, is committed in the manner of procuring them, and of exciting others to procure them; but when once our property, not to treat them as men, and as men to be redeemed, must be considered by the righteous judge of all the earth, as a crime of uncommon aggravation. Is it not enough that these poor men should be reduced to the lowest condition our natures are capable of, and be deprived of liberty, (which in particular we their masters profess to value above life itself), for our outward advantage, that we should not admit them to the well-grounded hope of another life, to comfort them under their bondage and toil in this? that there should be so many complaints of the generality of our planters, and these so well founded, that they are not only indifferent, but averse to their being instructed in the knowledge of Christ for salvation, and that too for reasons which heighten the crime greatly? This did not Abraham; who having servants born in his house, *i. e.* slaves, God testified of him, “ I know — that he will command his “ children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way “ of the Lord:” and it is immediately added, “ that the Lord may “ bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him,” Gen. xviii. 19. With what propriety, therefore, was this kind parent and master made the father of the seed which was to bless all nations, who shewed such impartial benevolence in the matters of salvation to all? Indifference here cannot be innocent: If, where the outward life of others is in hazard, God can be so angry at this temper, will he not shew higher indignation at it, where the eternal life of souls is in question? “ Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that “ keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to “ every man according to his works?” Prov. xxiv. 12. Is not this the high accusation against the Pharisees, of their “ taking away the “ key of knowledge?” Luke xi. 52. Or is this fulfilling God’s intention of giving his professing people “ the lands of the Heathen?” Psal. cv. 44. Or, finally, is not this the consummation of all gospel-crimes, “ forbidding to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway?” and which are followed with these dreadful words: “ for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost,” 1 Thess. ii. 16.

Indians.



Indians. They are our slaves : yet this ought not to hinder our Christian bowels to be moved for their salvation, but rather, as giving us more power over them, excite our endeavours, from the greater hope of success, to bring them to it. Thus might we turn their evil into good ; and make their slavery to men prove the happy occasion of their becoming partakers of the glorious liberty of the sons of God ; and beautify with salvation those black, and long outcast sons of Ham. There also dwell many idolaters called Christians, for the recovery of whom from their lying delusions and the depths of Satan, it were both the honour and the joy of our Christian love to labour.

Behold then a wide field whitening to a heavenly harvest. By our beneficence we may make a happy beginning for providing the labourers, and so shew ourselves of the same spirit of love for the salvation of many souls as Paul and his Lord.

If this apostle could press so earnestly, and by so many arguments, the Christian benevolence of the Corinthians, to shew itself by their liberality, for the supplying the outward necessities of their brethren at Jerusalem, in a time of outward scarcity (*a*) ; how much more fervently may you be urged to employ your beneficence towards supplying whole nations of your brethren of mankind, in their absolute famine of the bread of life eternal ?

If to be like the God of mercy ; if to do to others, as, if you were in their circumstances, and they in yours, (and sovereignty might have made it so), you would “ now” wish they would have done to you ; if having it in the power of your hand, by a part of your substance, to shew mercy, you would take pleasure in choosing a preferable work of kindness ; if you reflect that God might have called others to shew this regard

(*a*) 2 Cor. viii.

to him, to Christ, and to souls, but distinguisheth you, by calling you to this honour; and consider, that if you should decline, he will find others to fulfil this service, it being impossible he should ever be at a loss for hearts to feel, or hands to minister to these necessities he would provide for, as he will not either hereafter want heads to crown with honour, or mouths to fill with praise, as the rewards he shall bestow for such labours of love, shewn to the gospel of his salvation, and to the souls he would redeem by it: if such considerations, I say, can move, then let them have all their weight with you for the promoting of that, for which we now solicit, as, upon the slightest review they will be found so strongly to apply to it.

Great was the desire of these nations to obtain this vast conquest, and great their triumph, when God prospered, beyond expectation, our arms for that end: and shall not a sense of gratitude, by engaging in what will most please our divine Benefactor, the sending his beloved gospel among the nations he hath given as dust to our sword, be the great expression of our thankfulness to him?

To this too a sense of duty ought to determine us, by reflecting, if, as by our context we are instructed, that whether we eat or drink, we should do all to the glory of God; much more ought this to be attended to, in the more important affairs of extended dominion and commerce. These should be considered, not only as great favours, vouchsafed by him who doth in heaven and earth what pleaseth him, but as great talents he committeth to us for the purposes of his glory in the world. Having therefore amongst us the oracles of God, and consequently the unpolluted truth of salvation, it behoveth us to think of God's calling for it at our hands, to make at such a time the ends of the earth to see the salvation of God: else what account shall we make



make unto him and to his Christ, when he cometh and reckoneth with us (*a*), according to the command inseparable from all his talents, " Occupy till I come (*b*) ? "

Let justice also move us to this beneficence. We have honour, and mean to have profit, by our sovereignty and intercourse with these poor Heathen; and if we receive advantage by their labours and temporal things, ought we not to communicate to them of our spirituals? the rather indeed that, by their becoming partners with us therein, we shall not diminish, but rather many ways increase the outward advantages expected by them.

In this we ought the rather to be stirred up to vigour, lest the subjection of these nations, without a suitable care in this matter, should prove a curse, and not a blessing, both to them, and to us.

You need not be informed, that, in the communication of different nations, their several vices are made known to one another; nor that, by the reigning corruption in all men, the infection of these is too ready to prevail. Neither, alas! need it be told, how long and much already that holy name by which we are called, and wherein is all our hope, has been blasphemed by these Gentiles, by the dissolute manners of our countrymen, having intercourse with them; nor how in particular our people of commerce, in bartering for the fruits of their toil, have criminally availed themselves of that unhappy disposition which, it seems, they have to intoxication, by too wantonly providing them with the means of it; thus making them many times more the children of Satan, than they were, when we first found them, in their native ignorance and barbarity. Let us then be persuaded to send the ministry of the everlasting gospel amongst them, as the best balance against these evils; that by our missionaries

(*a*) Matth. xxv. 26.—30.

(*b*) Luke xix. 13.

they may not only have the advantage of disinterested and laborious instruction in that doctrine which is according to godliness, but by beholding their harmless and blameless lives, as the sons of God in the midst of a perverse nation, this word of life may be fully, and in its true power to save, held forth to them.

Let the good zeal in Old England, in the different associations there for propagating this gospel into foreign parts, provoke us to holy jealousy in this matter.

And let the strong and general disposition \* now prevailing in New England to encourage the sending the word of salvation to these Indians, together with the hopeful beginnings amongst them to receive it, incline us the more to devise liberal things, upon this occasion, for the salvation of many men.

We ought to be the more zealously affected to this good work, from the consideration of the unceasing activity of the priests of Rome to confirm in, and pervert more of these Heathen tribes to their delusions and idolatries. Let the truth itself then be far and wide diffused, if peradventure such as have been led astray may be recovered, and to prevent the farther spread of these fatal errors. Why should the work of Antichrist and Satan be always performed with more resolution than that of Christ? shall their rewards be greater or more sure? and shall not the kingdom of Christ, of truth and righteousness, prevail over all at last?

Let the abounding liberality to other purposes, better or worse, prevail to excite real Christians not to shut the hand of liberality in a cause, which to them at least should be dear, the saving many souls; and thereby shew, that the spirit which is in them, is not less vi-

\* See Dr Chauncy's sermon, at Mr Bowman's ordination to this mission at Boston, August 31. 1762, and addressed to the Marquis of Lothian, as president of our society, p. 29. &c.



gorous than that which is in the world. For every species of human misery, relief is found ; for the advancement of every laudable art, useful improvement and undertaking, the spirit runs high and encouragement aboundeth ; and who observeth not, that for promoting every branch of luxury and vice, every seminary of dissipation and idle amusement, the profusion is immense ? Shall it be said then, that at once it was our reproach and guilt, that the best and most valuable purpose possible, the propagating the gospel for the salvation of many souls, was the only design which found not friends, nor liberal support among us ?

Moreover, let the seasonableness of the call to this charity incline us to hearken to it. God works by means : and it belongs to wisdom, to seize upon the true occasions for action. Many Heathens have now fallen under our sceptre. Their first impressions with regard to us must naturally have great effects, and give a favourable or the opposite turn to all our future attempts amongst them. As to the civil part of our government, we need be in little pain. The genius of our excellent constitution, the wisdom of our administration will direct to gentleness in government amongst them, and shew how much it is their happiness, that they are fallen under our dominion. Nor let the appearance of regard fail in the religious view : and what may be more expected to answer that end, than our discovering, upon our first full access to them, a truly Christian concern for their everlasting happiness ? If any thing can, this is suited to incline them, now and hereafter, to hearken to what is spoken to them about salvation so disinterestedly sent them from us.

Neither is it a circumstance altogether immaterial to encourage donations to so good a work, that what is bestowed, is not committed to single persons, however worthy and well qualified, but whose death or other circumstances

cumstances might render the best design intrusted to them, abortive; but unto a formed and legal society, which hath so long approved itself wise and faithful in these matters; and which, again, hath connected itself with a board of correspondents in New England, whose zeal hath already raised considerable contributions, unequal however (as may be well imagined) to this vast undertaking, but whose caution suspended their bounty, until they should be formed into a body corporate, to the end of securing for ever a right application of their own, as well as what beneficence of others might be committed to their care: a consideration far from being insignificant to the causing our benignity flow in this channel.

We are naturally led by this to another and considerable ground of persuasion upon this subject; the good consequences of these our beginnings, in this truly Christian benevolence. From what a small matter hath our society for propagating Christian knowledge in our highlands and islands; risen to its present flourishing state? When first projected in this nation, (not then, nor formerly so affluent as now), it was when extremely exhausted by an expensive public, but unsuccessful undertaking; as well as by a desolating famine, that had for several years raged and laid waste our country. One school was all the benevolent projectors at first attempted, which too, after repeated discouragements, was necessarily deserted. Their zeal however abated not; and to their own private contributions, having gained, by the church; public collections, over every difficulty it hath now triumphed, and spread far and wide its kind influence. As in prayer, so in active good designs, for promoting the divine glory in the earth, men ought not to faint, nor be weary in such well-doing. Who knows where a small matter done according to the will of God, and in imitation of the



grace of his Son, seeking the salvation of many men,  
 may go? The divine blessing is silent, secret, and un-  
 failing. See it, in what at the beginning was pronoun-  
 ced upon grass, and trees, and animals, and man, for  
 their multiplying and increasing, in order to replenish  
 the earth; which, for that end, continueth unto this  
 day. But, surely, it is most to be expected, in what the  
 Almighty taketh most pleasure of advancing, and con-  
 cerning which his most determined purpose is declared,  
 that it shall continue while sun and moon endure, and  
 until all nations are brought into its subjection. Much  
 hath been done already in the propagation of this gospel  
 in the world, and in circumstances not so promising as the  
 present are, amongst the Heathens of our America. The  
 days are lengthened out, and the long-suffering of God,  
 under great provocations, is continued with the world,  
 and with us, for this very end, that the fulness of the  
 Gentiles may come in, and all Israel be saved. Our  
 hands should not hang down, therefore, nor our knees  
 wax feeble; but rather, with cheerful hope of success,  
 ought we to remember the words of our Lord himself  
 upon this subject: "Then said he, Unto what is the  
 "kingdom of God like? or whereunto shall I resemble  
 "it? It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man  
 "took, and cast into his garden, and it grew, and  
 "waxed a great tree: and the fowls of the air lodged  
 "in the branches of it." And again, — "It is like lea-  
 "ven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of  
 "meal, till the whole was leavened (a)." When there-  
 fore, in the love of the truth and souls, we send the go-  
 spel, God's incorruptible seed, to these new and far  
 extended regions; not as Antichrist sent his delusions,  
 two centuries ago, to the other part of that world, in  
 fire, and blood, and endless spoil; but in peace, in holi-

(a) Luke xiii. 18. &c.

ness, and the labours of self-denying love for salvation ; who can say, into whose heart it may be put, to encourage every mean for the advancement of this heavenly design ? or what difficulties shall be overcome in the execution of it ? or to how many the gospel thus sent, shall prove the wisdom and the power of God to salvation ?

Nor, however undesirable, is it unfit to mention another, but melancholy reason, not void of force, to induce a Christian to this benevolence ; the decay of real and vital religion amongst ourselves. It hath been much observed, that this is a sad truth with us : and notwithstanding what hath been said in alleviation, they who think seriously of these things, continue persuaded that there is great ground for the observation. It is long since it was sung by a poet used to be called divine \*,

*Religion stands on tiptoe in our land,  
Ready to pass to the American strand.*

A Christian can never hate his country, but, when in danger, will with Esther say, “ How can I endure “ to see the evil which shall come upon my people (a) ? ” and with his Lord, when sin is fast bringing it to ruin, “ If thou hadst known, in this thy “ day, the things which belong to thy peace ! but now “ are they hid from thine eyes (b) : ” yet, as we have seen, he is taught by his religion to rise superior in his soul to country, friends, and every narrow limit, by which the persuasions of men have heretofore set bounds to their attachments. Therefore, while the Christian mourns over what he observes may provoke a holy God

\* Herbert's church militant.

(a) Esth. viii. 6.

(b) Luke xix. 42.



to forsake his own country, with regard to the deep concerns of salvation, he will find from these scriptures, whence he draws all his comforts, silencing considerations to his complaints upon this heavy calamity (*a*); nay be made to rejoice by what God assures him of there, that this is an everlasting gospel; that when, for the abuse of it, it is taken from one people, it shall be given to another, to bring forth its fruits (*b*). When such are his impressions in particular, concerning his own people, for their infidelity, impieties, and forsaking their former faith and love, he will say, "The will of the Lord be done;" and in the gospel's passing from the east to the west, even like lightning from the one end of heaven to the other, will also say concerning it, "God-speed;" or, at such a time, be the more liberal in sending it, if peradventure, upon such an account, God should not only lengthen out outward tranquillity (*c*), but continue yet a while longer to his dear native country, his truth, his pure ordinances, and his Spirit.

What objection can be raised against this beneficence? Not sure, the present stupidity, ignorance, superstition, or any abounding vice amongst the people for whom we solicit. These are the strongest reasons possible for our Christian compassions being moved towards them: and in these respects (which should touch us) they are in no other savage state, than other nations, and our own fathers were, when the light of the gospel first shone upon them, and when these weapons, which are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down the strong holds of Satan, were wielded amongst them, and brought them into professed subjection to Christ Jesus.

Their distance cannot be given as a reason for shut-

(*a*) Matth. xi. 25. 26.; 2 Tim. ii. 18. 19. &c.

(*b*) Matth. xxi. 43.

(*c*) Dan. iv. 27.

ting the hand of liberality, or of being indifferent about their instruction to salvation. From what distance did the love of Christ bring him to deliver us? To what distance did the Christian benevolence of our apostle carry him, in wearisome journeys to save men? Indeed the whole doctrine of Christianity annihilates time, distance, and every "fashion of this world," in the matters of its love. Besides, if our beneficence is blessed, as a means of bringing these Heathen men to salvation, yet a little while, and, according to it, we shall meet with them as redeemed brethren, in one blessed place, never more to be separated.

Least of all be hearkened to, what we know infidelity hath often whispered concerning mankind in their uninstructed situation, "that it is better they remain in ignorance \*." This only can have reason in it, if Christ hath not died for men, and his knowledge had not been necessary to justify sinners before God. And even upon other suppositions, it cometh ill from such as generally plume themselves abundantly upon their own superiority of knowledge; as if others, for want of their measure of it, were, upon this account, an inferior rank of beings. But if the knowledge attainable by men in this life gives a just occasion for such distinction amongst them; how illiberal is it to deny to any of the human race any mean of it, did it serve for no other purpose than to open their minds, and lead them into what are, by these objectors, esteemed more valuable branches of it? It were well for our assuming infidels, sometimes to reflect what they must have been in point of their boasted knowledge, but for the religion they so much hate and condemn, and for the general light it hath cast upon all things in the country and age wherein they live.

\* See Drs Wallace and Blair's sermons before the society, where this objection is fully and well considered.



To conclude: Let all be persuaded to take opportunities of contributing to this great and good design, as the Lord shall prosper them. We are all witnesses, how universally, even to the lowest orders of men, a spirit can spread, as to the national advantages we ought to reap from this successful war, upon its happy conclusion. Were but half the concern shewn about the issues of it, respecting the advancement of the spiritual kingdom of God, and of his Christ, we should probably be in no want of outward means, both by public and private encouragement, for carrying the salvation of our Lord to every corner of the Heathen world, where providence hath now given us a name, and an influence. But all men have not faith in the gospel of this kingdom, nor are inspired with the love of it.

In the mean time, let those who are stirred up to contribute, do it without grudging: "for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Why should not the gift be cheerfully made? If it relieves the eye, the ear, and the heart of humanity, to lift the burthen from the outwardly oppressed, or to make the sorrowful glad; much more joy may it cause to spring up in their hearts, who have believed on Jesus Christ for life everlasting, to send, by whatever labour and expence, the knowledge of his name to the ends of the earth; who, as themselves have happily experienced, was "anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to deliver Satan's captives, to recover sight to the blind, and to preach to the poor of all nations, the acceptable year of the Lord (a)."

We cannot indeed, by any means of our providing, convert souls. That must be the work of God alone: but he hath said, "As the rain cometh down, and the

(a) Luke iv. 18. &c.

“ snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but  
 “ watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and  
 “ bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread  
 “ to the eater : so shall my word be that goeth forth  
 “ out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void,  
 “ but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it  
 “ shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it (a).”

As this, then, is put into our power, let us, with cheerful hope of the promised blessing, scatter wide his saving word to every corner of the earth, and to the isles afar off upon the sea, rejoicing, while we are redeemed, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot ; that the wisdom and grace of God have so abounded towards us, as, by the Christian use of our earthly substance, that which perisheth, can be turned into heavenly and enduring substance ; and we may so make to ourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon, that “ when we fail, we may be received into everlasting habitations.”

Not only, indeed, ought we to be cheerful in this planting and sowing for eternity, expecting the increase from God ; but so “ labouring together with God, and “ working together with Christ,” our hearts may be raised to a true grandeur and elevation, by mingling our little thoughts and actions with their great designs, of bringing out of every tongue and nation upon earth, and that to the remotest ages, a redeemed people to their praise for ever and ever.

The most valuable thing and opportunity, we acknowledge, may be thrown away ; many may not be beneficent upon this great occasion ; some who appear to be so, may be influenced by unworthy considerations, and thereby fall short of the true honour and joy belonging to it : but such as act with the true spirit of

(a) Is. lv. 10, 11.



beneficence, must experience an elevation in their minds, while they reflect, that, in sending the knowledge of salvation to these dark places of the earth, they are kindling a flame which may shine while sun and moon endure, nay, which, after the long lasting light of these heavenly bodies, and all the temporary life and comfort it hath produced, is extinguished, shall blaze out with greater glory, and brighten more and more in eternal ages, yet to come; when the uncreated and unextinguishable rays, proceeding from the glory of God and the Lamb, which this gospel begins to display, shall give light, and life, and comfort to the nation of the redeemed for ever and ever. A benefactor here, then, even in a mite, possessing these views, hath his heart lifted up to the heart of his Redeemer, and ascends with him into his chariot of salvation. The ambition of kings and conquerors upon earth is low, when compared to his high aim, who thus rides in the high places of his God: and the day to be revealed will declare it.

Neither shall the reward of every one, according to his own work or labour, fail (*a*). We have already mentioned the present peace, joy, elevation, and hope the spiritually benevolent are made partakers of: but if Jesus, at his coming, shall say to his redeemed, in respect to their Christian acts of outward kindness, "Come ye blessed, — for I was an hungred, — in prison," &c.; how much more will he make the transporting declaration, in regard to their spiritual compassions, sympathies, and supplies, towards hungry and captive souls for their deliverance? and over-rule also here the humble objection of "When saw we thee?" &c. by the kind reply, of "Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these," (however unknown by face, nation, or language, till that day), "you did it unto me (*b*)?" This

(*a*) 1 Cor. iii. 8. 9.

(*b*) Matth. xxv.

shall lead them to their "Master's own joy;" *i. e.* not only the satisfactions of redemption in general, but particularly, the purest felicity of having loved others, in the ardours and self-denials of heavenly compassions, for their salvation.

The foundation of this discourse was laid in this, "That as we had been at first formed in the image of the God of love, so in the regeneration, according to the gospel of Christ, we were not only restored from the depravities of self, but therein love was carried to new and formerly unknown heights." Accordingly, at and ever after the grand period of Christianity we have just now mentioned, we may fully discern how this shall take place, when that multitude which no man can number shall be gathered into one, from all kingdoms and ages of the world.

Let us for once imagine, that Adam had continued innocent, and that God had blessed him, and all his posterity, according to his promise of life in his covenant: how to the latest age may we easily conceive, the whole generations descending from him, must have been knit together in love; not to him only, as the common head and fountain of all, but to one another also, as brethren of one blood, as the instruments of bringing one another into such happy existence, as well as helpers of one another's joy, by continued mutual kind offices. The transition is easy to what is now before us. Jesus Christ is the common fountain and head of this new spiritual generation, according to the love and will of his heavenly Father. The men of it are begot from age to age by the instrumentality of one another, in the use of the word of truth, the incorruptible seed of God, by prayer, by holiness, and every appointed method for saving souls; no less really, than men would have been in innocence, or are now outwardly brought into being, by means of one another. Divine wisdom, which a-



boundeth in the whole of our redemption, hereby lays foundations, not only for unheard-of obligations of love to God, and the Lamb, and the Spirit, but also for new ties and bonds amongst these spiritual and new-born children, tenderer and stronger than ever heretofore could have been known; as the second is greater than the first Adam, and the life communicated through him nobler than the first earthly one; as in every respect the new gift is superior, so are the obligations of conveying it to the happy possessors. This admits, even in this world, of a copious and delightful illustration; but at the second coming of our Lord, shall be made manifest, with all God's judgments, in another manner than now is possible to be explained. For then the wide extended, and to us unsearchable present paths of providence shall be laid open, and the way where the bowels of love, the intercessions, the labours, the holy patterns, the liberalities, and every compassion of the children of God by Jesus Christ, for the salvation of their fellow men, were directed to go, and to become effectual by the astonishing over-ruling blessing of their Lord for the conversion of sinners, and helping one another onward to glory, made known. When the body of Christ therefore is completed, the several members shall not only be found united to him as head, but necessarily and inseparably knit together also in indissoluble obligations of love. It shall then appear, that, from age to age, they were spiritually descended from one another, spreading and multiplying, as new generations sprung up; the same blessed truth in all their hearts, creating a dearer relation than any blood, and the same spirit which accompanied it there, uniting closer in love than any outward relation in this life can possibly do (*a*). As to the throne, therefore, the song of salvation and blessing shall ascend

(*a*) Eph. v. 15. 61. 1 Cor. vi. 17.

for

for ever for this great salvation ; so the congratulations, the embracings of spiritual fathers and their sons and daughters, and they again with theirs, in long successions, and of every helper of another's joy and redemption, shall then be such, as now we have neither thought nor language for. Our earthly connection and obligations are plainly, not only to immediate, but to our parents in all past ages for our existence. And by this hint we may at once discern, how far and wide the heavenly connections and joys of the children of God will justly be carried, when all is hereafter brought to light ; the distinct links of this chain being no less necessary in point of instrumentality than the nearest, in the latter than in the former case, as the transport and obligation must be incomparably stronger in the last than in the first. And in regard to what is now before us, as there are vast and yet unknown tracts of the earth, where the gospel must be preached before our Lord shall come again, and many of these in connection with our new conquests in America ; who knows, where he who sits on the circle of the earth, may please to direct our present liberality to go for salvation ; and lay foundations for everlasting astonishment and joy to the spiritual benefactors, as well as to the obliged ?

Behold then a state, where our love shall be absolutely perfected to God, and to one another ; its ancient law magnified, and carried to the utmost height ; corrupted self destroyed, its fear and envy for ever cast out, the deepest foundations laid for kindness, and the highest exertions corresponding to them for ever ! Who would not above all things desire to be made partakers of such an inheritance amongst the saints in light ! who not breathe for many others becoming fellow-heirs with them herein, and do, as God giveth opportunity and power to promote so divine a purpose !

May that heavenly name, then, be hallowed, which  
brings



brings men to a state so perfect and so blessed ! that kingdom come, which draws men to its subjeion by such tender love ! and that will be done, which would have all without distinction saved and brought to it ! and that which we are now about, prosper to these great ends !

“ If, then, there be any comfort in love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye our joy, that ye may be like-minded, having the same love ;” remembering, that in this, as in other labours of heavenly love, “ he which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly ; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give ; not grudgingly, or of necessity ; for God loveth a cheerful giver : and God is able to make all grace abound towards you ; that you always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work ; being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth thanksgivings unto God.” Amen.

The

The present S T A T E of the Society  
in Scotland for propagating CHRISTIAN  
KNOWLEDGE.

THE society in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge took its rise about the year 1700. — A few private gentlemen laid the foundation of it at Edinburgh, with a design to propagate the knowledge of Christianity through the remote corners of the Highlands of Scotland.

After these gentlemen had procured subscriptions to the extent of 1000 l. Sterling, they obtained from her Majesty Queen Anne, a proclamation, recommending the design to all her subjects; and soon after, her royal letters patent, erecting the subscribers into a society, or body corporate, to be ever after designed, *The society in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge*; and granting unto them full power to receive subscriptions, mortifications, donations, legacies, sums of money, lands, goods, and gear; and therewith to erect and maintain schools, for teaching to read the holy scriptures, and other pious books; as also to teach writing and arithmetic, in the highlands, islands, and remote corners of Scotland, and in other parts therein mentioned; and to use such means for instructing the people in the Christian reformed Protestant religion, as might be competent, &c.

In consequence of this patent, which bears date the 25th of May 1709, the first nomination of members was made by the Lord President and judges of the court of Session, out of the list of original subscribers. — And since that time rules of management have been framed, so full and complete, that now there is no part of their business without its proper and known regulation.



At the time of the revolution, the Highlanders were many of them sunk in the grossest tenets of Popery : — their clanships, their personal services, were hard and slavish to the highest degree : — their chiefs were tyrannical, not amenable to justice : — their private and personal feuds were unextinguished : — in short, a state more unhappy could scarce be imagined ; and yet it has in fact already required a space of near eighty years, with the repeated endeavours of the King and parliament, and of this society, to convince them that liberty was to be preferred to slavery, industry to idleness, true Christianity to Popery.

The method followed by this society, is that of erecting public schools in the different corners of the highlands and islands, under the inspection of the several presbyteries where they are situate, who transmit, annually, a report to the society anent the state of them. — The qualifications of the several schoolmasters must be certified on trial as follows, *viz.* That the candidate is a person well known to the presbytery, of whose piety, loyalty, and prudence they are satisfied ; that he understands the principles of the Protestant religion, writing, and arithmetic ; that they judge him well affected to the present government, and in every respect qualified for the office of schoolmaster. — Their duty is to instruct their scholars in the principles of the Christian reformed religion ; — to direct their morals, and to train them up in the social virtues ; — to teach them writing and orthography, arithmetic and church-music, but no Latin ; — to report those who are absent, to the visitors ; — to transmit lists of their scholars annually, with the time of their entry, the time of their departure, and degree of proficiency ; — to worship God every day and every night ; — and to take care that the scholars attend public worship on the Lord's day. — They are likewise to teach their scholars to translate the Irish language into English,  
and

and to speak the English. — They are not allowed to serve by a substitute, nor their schools to vaik more than twenty days ; and no salary is paid to them without proper certificates of their service, and reports made by the visitors. — If these are made, the salaries are paid twice in the year.

The number of scholars of both sexes presently taught at the several schools kept up and maintained by the society, amounts to about 6700. — Many of these schools are situated in the most distant and lonely corners of the continent, and some of them in the most solitary islands of the sea. — And in placing them, the society are particularly careful not to settle too near any parochial schools, but rather to disseminate and spread them as far and as wide as possible. — This society has subsisted for no more than fifty-four years ; and yet, at the lowest computation one can make, it has been the means of instructing as many thousands of poor helpless children in the knowledge of Christianity. — Sure a design such as this deserves to be encouraged.

From the year 1709, downwards to the year 1738, the society went upon the footing of their first patent ; but in that year they applied for a second. — They got it, to this effect : “ His Majesty thereby ratifies and confirms the original patent before recited ; and also further impowers and authorises the society, by all lawful means, and according to rules to be by them established, to cause such children as they shall think fit, be instructed and bred up in husbandry and housewifery, or trade and manufacture, as they should think proper, at such places, and in such manner, as to them and their directors for the time being shall seem the most practicable and expedient,” &c.

Upon obtaining this second patent, the society, by advice of some persons skilled in agriculture, erected a school in the parish of Callendar, for teaching that hap-



py art. — They were encouraged to do the like with regard to manufactures, in several other places, by some persons of distinction who took the said schools under their immediate care and inspection; and also by that laudable spirit of erecting workhouses, which, of late, has become so general and prevailing: with which good designs the society has not failed to concur, by appointing proper salaries for masters and teachers in such workhouses; as has already been done in the orphan-hospital and poor-house in Edinburgh, and in the poor-houses at Dalkeith, Musselburgh, West-kirk, and Canongate.

The society, some time ago, gave a commission and salary to a schoolmaster for manufactures at Craig near Montrose. — And in consequence of a special mortification for that effect made by John Raining, of Norwich, merchant, they erected a schoolhouse at Inverness, which cost above 500 l. Sterling, and at which the scholars are taught different kinds of manufacture.

At Lochcarron and in Glenmoriston, two colonies established by the trustees for promoting the linen manufacture, the society endeavoured to push the purposes of their second patent. — They are sensible that their patents, though seemingly distinct, tend to advance the same happy end. — Religion and industry go always hand in hand, — they strengthen and establish one another.

As to the attempts of the society for converting to Christianity the North-American Indians, it is thought unnecessary to say any thing here. The importance of that charity has been fully treated in the preceding sermon; and the uncommon prospect there now is of the success of these attempts, will further appear from the Account of affairs in that quarter of the world, hereto annexed.

Names of the persons appointed to receive  
BENEFLECTIONS in *London* and *Edin-*  
*burgh*, for the use of this SOCIETY.

In *London*, Mess. *Roffey* and Company, Mer-  
chants.

In *Edinburgh*, Mr *John Davidson*, Writer to the  
Signet.

## FORM of a LEGACY.

*Item*, I give and bequeath the sum of  
to the Society in Scotland for propagating Chri-  
stian Knowledge, to be applied [*either to the pur-*  
*poses of the first or second charters, as the donor*  
*pleases.*]

Committee of DIRECTORS for  
the year 1763.

*James Smollet* of *Bonhill*, Esq; his Majesty's She-  
riff-depute for the shire of *Dumbarton*, and  
one of the Commissaries of *Edinburgh*, Preses.  
Mr *John Erskine*, one of the Ministers of *Edin-*  
*burgh*.

Mr *John Russell*, Clerk to the Signet.

Mr *Archibald Wallace*, Merchant in *Edinburgh*.

Mr



Mr *James Robertson*, Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of *Edinburgh*.

Mr *Albert Munro* of *Coull*.

Mr *James Dundas* of *Philpstown*, Advocate.

Mr *William Miller*, Bookseller in *Edinburgh*.

Mr *Robert Walker*, Surgeon there.

Mr *Robert Russell*, Merchant there.

Mr *Alexander Tait*, one of the Principal Clerks of Session.

Mr *George Langlands*, Surgeon in *Edinburgh*.

Mr *John Forrest*, Merchant there.

Mr *William Ramsay* of *Preston*.

Mr *Walter Scott*, Baker in *Edinburgh*.

The Most Honourable the Marquis of *Lothian* is President of the General Court.

The Right Honourable *William Grant* of *Preston-grange*, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, Secretary.

*George Drummond*, Esq; present Lord Provost of *Edinburgh*, Comptroller.

*Robert Chalmers*, Accountant.

*John Davidson*, Writer to the Signet, Treasurer.

*Alexander Stevenson*, Writer in *Edinburgh*, Clerk.  
Bookholder.

*James Brown*, Bookseller.

*Alexander Coutts*, Officer.

